

PLUCK AND LUCK

COMPLETE STORIES OF ADVENTURE

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THE RICHEST BOY IN THE WORLD:

OR THE WONDERFUL ADVENTURES OF A YOUNG AMERICAN.

BY ALLYN DRAPER.

AND OTHER STORIES



The savage potentate looked at the youth, expecting to see some show of weakness. There was none, and then he bade the executioner do his work. At that instant a figure sprang to the side of the doomed boy. The newcomer was a young girl.

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THE WONDERFUL ADVENTURES OF A YOUNG AMERICAN

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CHAPTER I.

BRANDED.

Charlie Hope was a bright young fellow of eighteen, handsome, intelligent and well liked by all who knew him.

He resided at Stanhope, a thriving town on the Hudson, not many miles from the busy metropolis, and was regarded as the prospective heir to his father's fortune.

Egbert Hope was a man of sixty and had three children, two sons, Harold and Charlie, and a daughter Avice, the latter being about twenty and a most lovely girl in every way.

Harold Hope, the eldest child, a young fellow of twenty-five, had disappeared at the time we introduce our hero, and nothing had been heard of him for years.

It was rumored that he had forged notes and checks on the bank in which he was employed and had been compelled to seek safety in flight.

The elder Hope was reputed to be very wealthy, but the fact was that his affairs had of late been very much involved, and he was really upon the verge of ruin.

Charlie knew this, and he had found employment for himself in the city, so that when the crash came, as he knew it must soon, he would not be dependent upon his father for a living.

He hoped also to be able to support his sister, who had been reared in luxury and was unable to provide for herself, until she could be married to some one who would love and cherish her.

Matters were at this point when, one day, as Charlie was about leaving the office to go to the railroad station, the head of the firm called him into his private office.

"Hope," he said, handing the young man an envelope, "there is your salary for this month."

Charlie was rather surprised at this, for he had worked only a week in the current month, and was never paid until the expiration.

"I am much obliged to you, Mr. Griffiths, but I would rather not take my pay in advance."

"That is all right," said the other, with a peculiar expression which Charlie did not then understand. "I prefer to pay you now."

Then he clearly indicated by his manner that the interview was over, and Charlie had no alternative except to leave.

Just outside the door he met Mr. Thatcher, the cashier, who said, quickly:

"Hope, I'll trouble you for your keys. I expect to stay late to-night, later than anyone, and shall have to lock up."

Charlie handed over his keys, suspecting nothing, and then left the place, having just time to catch his train.

Upon arriving at Stanhope he met his sister, who had come down so as to walk up with him.

"I am sorry for you, Charlie," she said. "How did you come to do it? Was not Harold's sad plight a sufficient warning?"

"I don't understand you, Avice," said Charlie, a dread of coming danger rushing suddenly upon him.

"Why, Mr. Hurd says you have been discharged for irregu-

larities in your accounts. Father was sent word of it this afternoon."

"Hurd says I was discharged?" gasped Charlie. "How did he know about it?"

"Father told him."

"Then that accounts for their paying me ahead, for that look of Mr. Griffiths, for the demanding of my keys."

"You speak as if you had just learned of this," said his sister, with a puzzled look.

"So I have. Why should Hurd know of this, however?"

"I believe it was he who advised Mr. Griffiths not to make the matter public. Oh, Charlie, why did——"

"My sister, I know nothing of all this," cried the young fellow in great anguish of spirit. "What does it all mean?"

"Mr. Hurd will tell you. He has been most kind to father, and but for him our affairs would——"

"Don't talk to me of Jasper Hurd," cried Charlie, indignantly, taking such great strides that Avice was obliged to run in order to keep pace with him.

"Why, he is the best friend——"

"I do not believe it. His influence over father is not for his good. In my soul I believe he sent Harold away, and that he is now scheming to get possession of you."

"But I have nothing, Charlie."

"We don't know that. There is uncle Donald. It was always said that he would leave you a fortune which no one could touch."

"But then Mr. Hurd could not touch it, either."

"Tell me, Avice," cried Charlie, stopping suddenly, "has Jasper Hurd ever spoken to you of marriage?"

"Yes; and only this morning he made me another offer."

"And you refused him?"

"No. I said I must have time to consider."

"Refuse him, then!" cried Charlie, furiously. "Jasper Hurd is a bad man. I know it, I feel it. He has even now gained such an influence over our father that the poor man will do anything he asks."

"Why, he has greatly assisted——"

"Say no more!" cried the boy, excitedly, and as they had now reached the house, he dashed up the steps and sought his father's study at once.

The day was a trifle chilly and a fire was burning on the grate, for Mr. Hope was feeble and required considerable care.

The old gentleman was seated in an easy-chair, and a man of about thirty was fixing the fire with a long, brass-handled poker as Charlie entered.

"Good-evening, father."

"I am sorry to see you come home in disgrace, sir," said the old man, sternly.

"That's just what I want to know about," cried Charlie. "Mr. Hurd, I hear that you know something about this matter."

"Yes," replied the man at the fire, abruptly leaving his work. "I might say I discovered it first of all."

"What do you mean?"

"The house of Griffiths & Co. deals with our bank. Checks

frequently pass between us. That is how I managed to find drafts which you forged."

"Which I forged?" gasped Charlie.

"Exactly, but which I detected in time. I knew certain peculiarities in the signatures, and saw that they had been poorly imitated."

"Well?" said Charlie, striving to speak coolly, though inwardly he was at the boiling point.

"We made an examination, found tell-tale papers in your desk, and fixed the crime where it belonged. I counseled silence, however, and perhaps somewhere else you will be able to redeem the good name which you have blackened."

"Jasper Hurd, you are a contemptible scoundrel, and a liar to boot!" cried Charlie, in a passion. "I believe this to be a dastardly plot on your part to drive me from home as you drove my brother Hal, so that you may obtain the hand of Avice, and enrich yourself at the cost of my father's good name."

"Your father!" laughed Hurd. "He has nothing, and but for me this house and all would be swept away."

"Mr. Hurd is a good friend of mine," muttered the old man, "and I have made over to him all I have, so as to save it from the hungry wolves who——"

"Made over everything to him?" cried Charlie.

"Yes, by his advice; for in that——"

"Then you are ruined, indeed. Jasper Hurd, you may cajole this poor old man, but you cannot hoodwink me. To-morrow I shall demand a complete investigation, and then we shall see what part you have played in this infernal plot."

"I'd advise you to get out of the country as quickly as possible," laughed Hurd, "and not run the risk of arrest."

"And leave you to carry out your dastardly plans. Jasper Hurd, you are a liar, a thief, and——"

"You young cur, I'll thrash you well for those words."

Hurd sprang toward Charlie, and the young man would have fared badly had he been less quick-witted.

Seizing the poker, which Hurd had left with its point glowing in the coals, he brandished it as the man leaped forward.

Hurd seized it, about half way up, with his right hand, and aimed a blow at Charlie with his left.

Our hero gave his novel weapon a quick wrench, and brought the heated part right across the palm of his antagonist's right hand.

Hurd's fingers closed over it for a second, and then, with a cry of pain, he leaped back, tearing the hot iron from Charlie's grasp.

It fell upon the hearth with a clatter, and Hurd made a hurried movement with his left hand for the pistol, which Charlie knew he carried in his hip pocket.

"I have marked you well, villain!" cried Charlie, "and before I have done with you we shall see who shall triumph."

Then he dashed out of the door as a bullet flew over his head and buried itself in the staircase beyond.

He heard a heavy fall, and suspected that his father had fainted; but having no desire to be shot by the infuriated Hurd, rushed downstairs and out of the house.

It was now dark, and knowing that a train left for the city in a few minutes, Charlie hurried toward the station.

"I will clear this thing up to-night," he muttered. "There is no time like the present, and if Hurd catches me I can do nothing."

He reached the station just as a train was leaving, but jumping upon the platform of the last car, he made his way inside and took a seat, panting and exhausted from his late exertions.

CHAPTER II.

A STRANGE MEETING.

One hour later Charlie Hope stepped out of the train and proceeded downtown.

He would go to the office of Griffiths & Co. first and see the cashier, getting from him a statement concerning the forged notes, and then see Mr. Griffiths himself and ask for a full investigation.

"I knew Hurd was a scoundrel," he muttered, "but I little suspected how far he had pushed matters."

Jasper Hurd was a man of about thirty-two years of age, and had known the Hopes for little more than three years, having been paying teller in the same bank with Harold Hope at the time the latter disappeared.

Since then he had been made cashier, by a stroke of luck

the man who held that position having absconded with considerable of the bank's funds, as was alleged, and being now in parts unknown.

Jasper Hurd had pretended to sympathize deeply with Mr. Hope on account of his son's disgrace, and had offered to attend to his affairs.

He had gradually wormed himself into the old man's confidence, learned all his business secrets, and exerted an influence over him, which Charlie was now beginning to fear was for no good.

Egbert Hope's affairs, as has been intimated, were in a shaky condition, but Hurd had volunteered to prop up his falling fortunes and save him from ruin.

There had been a brother of Mr. Hope who had been in India many years, and who was reputed to be enormously rich, having made Avice his heiress, as was said, on condition that she did not marry without her father's consent.

Donald Hope had been absent so many years, however, that people began to think that he would never return, though Hurd was better informed than this, the scheming rascal laying his plans accordingly.

Once Charlie was out of the way, Avice married to him, and the old man dead, his fortune was made.

He knew that Charlie distrusted him, and, therefore, the first thing to do was to get rid of him, and matters would go on more easily.

With this brief explanation, we will follow Charlie Hope, and see how he prospered in his effort to justify himself.

Reaching the place of business of Griffiths & Co., he found the place tightly closed, not a sign of life being visible.

"That was only a story of the cashier's, so as to throw me off my guard," he muttered. "Well, I can find Mr. Griffiths, at all events. I wonder what Thatcher wanted to lie for? By the way, he and Hurd have always been thick. I should have thought of that before."

Leaving the store, he proceeded rapidly along the now silent and deserted street, his footsteps ringing out sharp and clear upon the pavement, and the air blowing keenly about his ears.

Suddenly as he passed a narrow lane or alley running toward the river, he heard a scuffle, and then a cry for help.

"Some street brawl," he thought. "I will do well to keep out of it. The police will come soon enough, and, after all, it may be only a ruse to get me down there and then rob me."

Thinking thus, Charlie was proceeding on his way, when again the cries came from the alley.

"Help! Murder! Help! Thieves!"

"That voice!" cried Charlie. "What can it mean? There is some mystery here."

Then he turned swiftly, reached the entrance to the alley, and dashed down it, soon catching sight of an old man struggling with three or four big bullies who seemed to be trying to rob him.

"Cowards!" cried Charlie, striking out vigorously with his fists. "Four to one! You ought to be ashamed."

One man fell heavily to the stones as Charlie struck out and a second quickly followed.

"Come on, all of you, and attack someone who is a match for you," cried Charlie, aiming a lusty blow at a third ruffian.

Just then there was a sudden flash, a dull sound, and a cry of pain from the old man.

"Lie low, boys, the shiners!" hissed one of the footpads, and in an instant the alley was deserted, save by Charlie and the man whom he had rescued.

The latter uttered a sharp cry of pain, staggered back and would have fallen, had not Charlie supported him in his arms.

"Summon help, boy, quick," gasped the man. "I fear the ruffians have done for me."

"Who are you?" asked Charlie with feverish eagerness, as those quick tones rang in his ear.

"Call for help, or it will be too late," was the hurried answer.

"Help, here, help!" screamed the boy, as he dragged his burden toward the street. "Help! Help!"

As Charlie reached the head of the lane he heard the sound of rapidly approaching footsteps, and he repeated his cries.

In a moment more two officers hurried up, and while one of them supported the wounded man the other dragged Charlie under a street lamp not far away, and demanded, bluntly:

"What have you been doing, you young ruffian? Who are you, and where do you live?"

"You are mistaken," said Charlie, quietly. "I found that man surrounded by roughs and drove them away."

"That's likely, isn't it? I've heard of fellows crying 'Stop thief' before now, so's to get off."

"That may be, but I have told you the truth."

"We'll see about that. Anyhow, I'm going to take you in."

"Hold on, Joe," cried the other officer, as his mate seized Charlie, and was about to handcuff him, "the old fellow says that a boy saved his life."

"Now I come to look at you," muttered Charlie's captor, "you ain't one of the alley gang after all. You look respectable and they don't."

Charlie now looked at the old man as he was brought under the light, and said:

"Good heavens! that face! Who are you, sir?"

"My name is Hope—Donald Hope, and I've just come home—"

"Why, I am Charlie Hope myself. Egbert Hope's son, and your own nephew," cried Charlie, excitedly.

"Better get him in somewhere, Joe," said one of the officers. "He'll want help, I take it."

The two officers then lifted the man up, and, pressing through the crowd which had begun to accumulate, presently reached a sort of bar and restaurant patronized by sailors.

Keeping the crowd back, they carried the man in here and laid him on a lounge in the private sitting room, Charlie remaining on guard while a physician could be summoned.

For some time the man remained motionless, but then he suddenly moved and said, eagerly:

"Did you say that you were Charlie Hope?"

"Yes, uncle," replied Charlie, knowing now why he had been so startled, for his uncle's voice was almost exactly like his father's.

"Let me look at you," said the man, raising up. "Yes, you are a Hope, sure enough. Egbert's son, eh? Well, well, how strangely things come about. It is very lucky I arrived home when I did. I was on my way from the dock to the railway station when attacked by those ruffians."

"Don't try to talk," said Charlie. "You must not excite yourself."

"To think that I should run across you," continued the old man, as if talking to himself, and scarcely looking at Charlie. "Well, well, the will must be changed now, though I suppose your father would carry out my wishes even if they were not written down."

Charlie became all attention in a moment, for he felt that he was about to hear some surprising revelations.

"Yes—yes. Egbert must not have it all," the uncle went on. "I made him my heir, you know, so that the money would remain in the family—made him heir to all I have or shall have."

"Great heavens!" murmured Charlie, "if he should die, that villain Hurd would come into all the property, and neither Avice nor I would have a penny."

"Avice!" mused Donald Hope. "Yes, she will get something when she is married. I told—"

Then he suddenly gasped and fell back upon the lounge.

Charlie hurried outside for a pitcher of water, finding upon his return that his uncle appeared more comfortable.

"The will must be changed," thought Charlie, "for if it is not, and anything should happen, all will go to Hurd."

A man entered at that moment and announced that he was a physician, and at once proceeded to examine into the condition of the wounded man.

This was presently seen to be most dangerous.

The doctor shook his head gravely, and said:

"If he lives till morning it will be wonderful."

"Then send for a lawyer," cried Charlie, "for it is of the utmost importance that he make his will to-night."

A messenger was sent off to procure legal assistance, but in a few moments after Donald Hope became unconscious, and neither knew Charlie nor uttered an intelligible sound.

A lawyer came, but he could do nothing, and after a long and weary night Donald Hope died soon after sunrise, having remained totally unconscious of his surroundings for several hours.

Charlie made the lawyer briefly acquainted with the facts in the case, and then, at the lawyer's suggestion, went out to obtain a breath of air and breakfast.

As he was walking mechanically along the street after this, he came suddenly upon Thatcher, the cashier of Griffiths & Co., and then he remembered that he was not far from his old place of business.

"Hallo, Hope, you here?" said Thatcher. "It's lucky I found you."

"You lied to me last night," cried Charlie, indignantly.

"Yes, I know; but there is something of more importance than that to talk about. Jasper Hurd is dead, and word has been sent to the city to arrest you for his murder."

"Hurd dead?" gasped Charlie.

"Yes; from the effects of the blow you struck him. The officers have been to the store early this morning, and you don't stand a ghost of a chance if you are caught."

"I am innocent."

"Yes, yes. I know that, but you must not be seen yet, for all that. I'll hide you where you won't be found in a hundred years if you only keep dark."

And then, utterly dazed and confused, Charlie was forced along the street and into a house, scarcely knowing whether he was awake or dreaming.

CHAPTER III.

CONDEMNED.

What followed this strange meeting with Thatcher was never clear to Charlie, for his brain was in a whirl, and he hardly knew whether he was himself or not.

He remembered faintly that a terrible accusation had been made against him, but what with the exciting incidents of the last dozen hours and the loss of sleep, he was uncertain whether he heard correctly or not, being in a sort of waking trance.

Thatcher gave him something to drink, to quiet his nerves, he said, and after that he remembered nothing for a long time, how long he never knew.

At last he awoke in a strange place, and with a strange feeling upon him, and for some time he thought he must be still asleep.

He was lying on a hard bed, and around him were others, arranged in tiers, some being empty and some having occupants, men dressed in coarse garments, the faces of none being familiar to him.

He heard all sorts of odd sounds, loud creakings and groanings, splashing and pounding, and again a heavy tread overhead somewhere, with an occasional sound of a harsh voice.

All this came to him gradually, and at last the truth dawned upon him, and he raised himself upon his elbow in his bunk and looked about him with considerable interest.

He was on board some sort of vessel at sea, as he knew by the swash of the water and the creaking of blocks and rigging.

"Oho, you're awake at last, are you?" asked a man in a bunk opposite. "Nice long sleep you've had of it, too, I should say."

"What vessel is this, and where are we?" asked Charlie. "We're the ship Roderick Dhu, and we're bound for Melbourne first, and then around the Cape."

"To Melbourne!" cried Charlie. "To Australia! How long have we been out, pray?"

"Two or three days."

"Then we must be on the ocean."

"Well, if you'll show me any land I'll give you a dollar," laughed the other. "On the ocean! I should say so!"

Just then one of the mates stuck his head down the hatch, and said:

"Turn up the watch, there. Come, new fellow, it's time you got to work."

Charlie went on deck with the rest, but all was new and strange, and he neither understood nor knew how to execute the orders that were given, until at last the captain caught sight of him, and said:

"What are you loafing for? Why don't you go to work? If you're green, do what you see the others doing."

"When did I come aboard, sir?" asked Charlie. "I am not a sailor, and don't want to be one. I don't understand this thing at all."

Charlie's appearance and manner greatly interested the captain, and, calling the boy aft where they were alone, the skipper asked:

"What is your name?"

"Charlie Hope, son of Egbert Hope, of Stanhope."

The captain then questioned Charlie narrowly, but, although he was convinced that the boy told the truth, he could not account for his being on board.

The men were then called up and questioned, and one, of

man who had at first spoken to Charlie, and who was known as George, said:

"He was brought aboard the night afore we sailed, sir, and put in his bunk. The man said he were tight, and would prob'ly sleep a long time."

"Who was the man?"

"Don't know, sir, though I've seen him aboard before. Tall fellow, red chin-beard, big eyes, bald head."

"Thatcher!" cried Charlie. "Raymond Thatcher, head bookkeeper and cashier for Griffiths & Co., where I used to work."

"Oh, I know him," said the captain. "I remember, now, he said he would bring me a good fellow to act as ship's clerk, but I did not see him again, and supposed that he had forgotten all about it."

"The scoundrel is in the plot, too, and wanted to get rid of me," thought Charlie. "I ought never to have trusted him."

As our hero was no sailor, and the captain was in want of a supercargo, Charlie was quickly installed in his office, and soon became a favorite with all hands.

At Melbourne, after a passage of nearly four months, the captain asked him if he would not remain aboard during the balance of the voyage, being well pleased with him.

Charlie was undecided until he chanced to see some New York papers that had been brought by the passengers on a fast sailing packet that arrived a day or so later.

In these he read the announcement of his father's death and the statement that Mr. Jasper Hurd, Mr. Hope's heir, was expected to marry Avice Hope after the customary period of mourning had passed.

"Hurd marry Avice!" gasped Charlie. "Then the villain is not dead? Oh, I might have known that Thatcher was lying."

Upon thinking over the matter, Charlie concluded to stay with the Roderick Dhu and her kind-hearted captain.

When the ship sailed, a month later, therefore, bound around the Cape of Good Hope, Charlie remained on board, repulsed but not conquered.

He had, all along, striven to perfect himself in all that attained to the profession of a seaman, and was now thoroughly acquainted with all the parts of a ship, and had begun to study navigation.

During the second stage of the voyage he prosecuted his studies with vigor, and devoured all the books in the captain's library, many of them being works of great practical value.

They had been having good weather for some time, when, as they were nearing the Island of Madagascar, at a point on which the captain desired to touch, a terrible storm arose, the like of which Charlie had never witnessed.

Driven far out of her course, swept helplessly on over the ocean for days, the skies dark and gloomy, the waves threatening death, the doomed vessel sped on, many of the men being washed overboard, and some dying from exhaustion.

The captain had been badly hurt by a falling spar, and the first mate was lying dead in his bunk, the second had been washed off the deck, and there was no one to direct affairs.

To add to this, one night they heard the awful sound of breakers on the lee shore, the night being so dark that nothing could be seen beyond the length of the bowsprit.

In a few minutes the vessel struck, and a scene of the wildest confusion ensued, the men being nearly beside themselves with fear.

The waves dashed over the vessel, and at every blow of the terrible surf Charlie expected it would go to pieces.

At last our hero was plunged into the sea and began swimming for shore.

More than once he was driven back by the fierce waves, and how he ever reached land always remained a mystery.

In the morning, however, he found himself upon a rocky coast, fragments of the wreck being driven all about, here and there the dead body of one of his unfortunate companions, but not a sign of life to be seen.

He started inland, and had stopped at a little brook to drink, when he was seized and found himself in the hands of a horde of dusky savages.

These hurried him away with loud cries, and presently he reached a village where, before an open space in the center, was a large hut with a sort of porch in front of it.

Under this, on a raised throne, surrounded by his warriors, sat a half-naked negro, his arms and legs covered with rings of gold, a lion skin thrown over his shoulders and a crown of feathers on his head.

Charlie was dragged in front of this ferocious creature, whose every expression denoted cruelty.

Darting a hurried glance around him, the poor boy saw that which filled his soul with terror.

It was the body of one of his shipmates, and the life had scarcely left it.

Two men dragged Charlie before the king, who made an angry gesture and hissed out some unintelligible command.

Charlie Hope was condemned to death.

CHAPTER IV.

RESCUED.

Surrounded by fierce savages, confronted by a brute in human form, more terrible than the wild beasts of the forests, Charlie Hope was certainly in as desperate a situation as ever man had been threatened with.

The king gazed at the boy in surprise, for he had evidently anticipated that Charlie would make some appeal, or at least attempt resistance.

His manner puzzled the savage potentate, and he looked fixedly at the youth, expecting to see some show of weakness.

There was none, and then, with a fierce cry, he bade the executioners do their work.

At that instant the hangings at one side and behind the monarch were violently agitated, and a figure appeared, and then sprang quickly to the side of the doomed boy.

The newcomer was a young girl—somewhat younger than Charlie himself, and marvelously beautiful.

She was dark, though not black like the rest, her complexion being a rich olive, and her features of the Egyptian rather than the Ethiopian cast.

At her appearance a cry of surprise arose, but when she advanced rapidly, threw her arms about Charlie's shoulders, turned her head and addressed a few vehement words to the king, all present appeared thunderstruck.

Charlie could not but observe the effect this incident had upon the king, and he saw at once that his life was to be spared.

Grateful for the girl's timely interference, he raised one of her hands to his lips and kissed it respectfully, at the same time darting a glance of deep thankfulness from his large, expressive eyes.

A delicate flush arose to the girl's cheeks and her own eyes fell before Charlie's gaze.

Then, addressing a word or two to the guards, who at once released their prisoner, she was about to lead him away, when she suddenly paused and gazed fixedly at the youth.

Charlie noticed the look, and was puzzled to account for it, when a familiar sound struck upon his ear.

It was the ticking of his watch, which he carried in an inner pocket of his sailor shirt.

It had stopped at the time of his plunge into the sea, but the sudden agitation or the heat of his body had caused it to go again, and it was the ticking which had attracted his rescuer's attention.

Drawing the watch from its hiding place by the thin gold chain to which it was attached, he touched the case spring and caused it to fly open.

The natives looked surprised, and the king addressed some inquiries to the maiden, who answered briefly, and then looked at Charlie.

"They think you are some strange animal, or maybe my familiar genius," said Charlie to the watch.

He put the watch back in his pocket and drew out a silver-plated match-safe which he had carried for a year or more.

This article seemed to attract as much attention as the watch, particularly when Charlie touched a spring and made the top fly up.

There were a dozen or more water-proof matches inside, and Charlie struck a couple on the rough bottom of the safe.

They were ignited at once, and the boy threw them into the dry grass behind him, this soon starting up a blaze.

Even the king looked surprised now, not to say alarmed, and Charlie quickly turned and trampled out the flames before they had spread.

The natives now set up a shout, and when the young girl, evidently a person of great importance, took Charlie's hand to lead him away, they fell down before him and treated him with the most abject deference.

Charlie's conductor led the way to a large and commodious hut, into which he was conducted with great pomp, a dozen slaves being appointed to wait upon him and obey his slightest command.

Food and drink were brought to him, and attendants fanned him and kept the flies from him while he ate, the maiden, meanwhile, standing near, and showing only too plainly by the glances she bestowed upon him that he had entirely won her heart.

"You are my guardian angel, my dear girl," he said, "and I shall never thank you sufficiently for what you have done."

The words were meaningless to her, of course, but she understood the looks and returned the pressure of his hand, her beaming eyes and her quickening breath showing the emotion she felt.

After resting for a while, Charlie walked out of the hut and went to the shore, accompanied by the girl.

Charlie had hoped, upon reaching the shore, that he might find some traces of his companions, but there were none, and when he asked his companions, by means of signs, if any like him had come ashore they pointed to the body of the sailor.

An angry look came into the boy's face, and his conductor fell upon her knees at his feet and clasped her hands, while the slaves prostrated themselves in the sand and uttered dismal cries.

"No, no, my darling, you must not kneel—it was not your work," cried Charlie, quickly raising the maiden tenderly and clasping her to his breast. "To you I owe my life, and to you shall be given my whole heart."

Then he returned to the village, where the whole population received them with great honor, and prepared to celebrate the event with the wildest and unrestrained rejoicing.

CHAPTER V.

ENRICHED.

Not until the night had been nearly spent did Charlie get a chance to sleep, and then the king himself attended him to his hut, which had been newly decorated within and without, as became the residence of so distinguished a person.

The next morning, while it was yet cool, Charlie went to the shore, and, with the aid of the natives, secured considerable of what still remained of the wreck and brought it to land.

The iron work was all saved, and the planks and other wood, which was of value, piled up beyond the reach of the tide.

The captain's books, charts and instruments, the men's clothing, and many other useful articles were also found and stowed in safe places.

A tool-chest, found on the sand, was a great acquisition, and satisfied upon inspection that its contents were in good condition, Charlie had it taken up to his house, to be kept until he needed it.

What occupied his thoughts was the project of some day building a vessel large enough to take him across the ocean, and he therefore sawed all the timbers he found, and kept his tools in good condition, not knowing when he might need them.

One day he made a discovery which proved of great use to him, and still further increased his influence among the people.

He knew that the captain had had a brace of fine pistols, and that there had been a quantity of ammunition aboard, but he had never been able to find any of these things, and had given them up as lost.

On this particular day, however, he found the brother of the king sitting before his hut with a small keg in front of him.

The keg contained a black dust, with which the man was playing, taking it up in handfuls and tossing it out upon the ground.

Charlie at once saw that it was gunpowder, and at the same time he noticed two pistols hung around the man's neck, the fellow evidently considering them very fine ornaments.

Charlie asked for them, but the man refused, and stepped back as if to secure his property.

Quickly rolling the keg of powder to a safe place, being watched by fully a score of people, the boy took a match from his pocket-case, struck it, and let it fall upon the loose powder.

Instantly there was a flash and a puff of dense white

smoke, at which strange occurrence the warriors expressed the greatest fear, falling upon their faces on the ground.

Charlie now demanded the pistols, and the chief handed them over, evidently fearing the wrath of the young white, who had already shown them so many evidences of his power.

Taking the pistols, our hero examined them and found them loaded, but without caps, which accounted for their not having been accidentally discharged before this.

Thinking that perhaps the man had found these, Charlie now demanded with every show of anger that the fellow should give him whatever else he had found.

The man was evidently afraid, and entering his hut he presently returned with a leather pouch containing bullets, a metal one filled with shot, and two or three boxes of percussion caps, all contained in a wooden box.

Quickly fitting caps to the pistols, Charlie discharged them in the air, much to the terror of the blacks, who retreated in the greatest consternation.

The days and weeks went on, and during this time Charlie was strengthening his influence among this strange people and preparing the way for his final escape.

He had begun at the start to learn the language, his protectress being his teacher, and he made such rapid progress that it was not long before he was able to converse quite well, his ability in this direction increasing as time passed.

Then he began to teach English to Ania, as the maiden was called, and she made as rapid advancement as Charlie himself had done, so that in the end they spoke both languages with equal fluency, using one or the other, as fancy dictated.

Ania was not of these people, she told Charlie, but had come from Egypt when a child, thus accounting for the difference in complexion and features between them and her.

The king, Mondono, she also told him, ruled over a vast territory, but his brothers, Ungb'wao and Kawoa, were desirous of dividing the government between them, the first wishing to take Ania for his wife.

Kawoa was the man from whom our hero had taken the pistols, and besides being a thief was wicked, cruel and heartless to a degree, having no regard for anything but his own selfish ends.

Ania bade Charlie beware of these men, but particularly of Kawoa, who was seeking his death by spreading reports that the young white wished to make them all slaves.

Charlie always went well armed after this, and began working up a scheme which would make him more popular, and put an end at once to the opposition of the king's ambitious brothers.

The fact that there being so much gold in possession of the people made him wonder if the precious metal was mined, and he asked Ania about it, telling her of its great value.

This was news to her, but she informed Charlie that it was not dug out of the earth, but had been brought up from the sea at a point some miles to the south of the chief village.

She showed Charlie the place, and he dove to the bottom a number of times, fastening a heavy stone to his feet to carry him down, and releasing it when he desired to come up.

After several trials he at last discovered the submerged wreck of an old ship, and brought up a bar of the precious metal from the bottom.

"There must be a fortune buried there," he said to himself, "and if I can only obtain it I shall have the means to carry out my life's work. It must, it shall be mine."

By his orders divers were sent down every day, twenty at a time at intervals, and this was kept up for a week, at the end of which time all the gold accessible was brought up.

There had been a forge on the Roderick Dhu, and Charlie had saved all the iron and copper, and now began to think how he could make a submarine diving dress, so that he might go under water and remain a longer time than was possible at present.

With the aid of the forge, an iron pot, a sheet of copper and some nails he made a helmet, but he must have a rubber suit, and the helmet must have a glass plate in front before he could become a practical diver.

The captain's library, before spoken of, had fortunately been saved, and the books it contained gave him information he could not otherwise have obtained.

From these he learned how rubber could be obtained, and he found a number of trees whose juice boiled down gave him just what he wanted.

He coated his suit thickly with rubber, making it waterproof; forging a copper breast-plate and back piece for his armor.

The seashore furnished him the means of making glass, and after several experiments he succeeded in getting a plate an inch thick and six in diameter, clear enough for his use.

This he inserted in his helmet, after first cutting a place for it, and then securing it firmly by means of a copper ring riveted firmly all around its edges.

A keg, covered with cloth, thickly coated with rubber, and having a tube leading from the bung into his helmet, would furnish him with air, and then his armor was complete, and he was ready to descend into the depths of the sea and wrest from old Neptune the treasures which had so long been held in his grasp.

CHAPTER VI.

EXALTED.

Having made all preparations, our hero descended to the wreck and made a more extended examination than he had ever before been able to do.

There was a large hole in her port side, and this he entered, getting into the hold and finding several chests, one of which he dragged out and smashed open with an ax before being obliged to return to the top.

The chest contained bars of gold, and one of them he took up with him, sending the divers down for the others, after telling them where to find the chest.

In the same manner he brought out half a dozen other chests filled with gold in bars and in coin and secured their contents, the men diving for the metal after he had gotten it out of the wreck.

Then it became necessary to use other means to get at the rest, and Charlie began to think how this could be done.

Constructing a box about two feet long by half that in width, and about six inches deep, he nearly filled it with powder, and fastened one of his pistols at one end, a strip of cloth separating this from the powder.

Then, with the works of the captain's clock, saved from the wreck, he made an arrangement which, when wound up, would, after a certain time, release a hammer which would fire the pistol.

It was simply an alarm clock, applied to a different use than that intended for it, and Charlie was grateful enough that it had been saved.

After filling his magazine with powder, loading and cocking the pistol, and winding the clockwork, Charlie closed the box, covered it with a rubber cloth, sealed it hermetically with hot caoutchouc, and took it below, placing it in the furthest part of the hold.

Then he went up and waited anxiously for the result, the alarm having been set to go off in three hours.

At last, prompt to the minute, there was a dull explosion, the waters were violently agitated, and he knew that his plan had succeeded, though how far was yet to be learned.

After the water had cleared, the explosion having soiled it, Charlie put on his armor and went down, finding to his extreme satisfaction that the wreck, which lay in about sixty feet of water, had been split right apart, the entire hold being exposed, and the deck torn off and broken into many fragments.

After this the entire treasure was secured, after many excursions to the bottom, and stored in a strong house which Charlie caused to be built in the woods.

All these operations had consumed time; the making of the diving armor, the construction of the infernal machine and the many descents to the bottom occupying several months, so that by the time the treasure had been secured Charlie had been more than a year with King Mondono.

To Ania he explained all that he had done, but the natives still regarded him as a god who could control the powers of earth and air, and it suited Charlie that they should continue to think so.

The old king had grown very fond of the young man, and had more than once intimated his desire that he would stay among them, and finally take his place at the head of the tribes.

Ania urged this also, but Charlie had other hopes, and looked forward to the time when he could return to his own country.

Two years had passed since the shipwreck, and the king suddenly became seriously ill, so that it was feared that he could not live.

The chiefs assembled in solemn conclave in the open space before the royal residence to discuss the situation and determine upon a new ruler, for it was necessary that the succession should be settled at once.

Both the king's brothers had designs upon the throne, and this meeting of the council was to determine which should rule absolutely, or whether the government should be divided between them.

Charlie was with the old king when the drums were beaten to call the assembly together, but he did not feel like leaving him then, and he therefore remained, doing what he could to alleviate the dying man's sufferings.

The king had not spoken for some time, and had been semi-unconscious; but now he suddenly rallied, and began talking rapidly and with great animation.

Suddenly Charlie noticed an unusual brightness of the king, accompanied by a twitching of the muscles, while at the same time some strange odor in the old man's breath attracted his attention.

Then, while he was yet speaking, and as he was about to rise, the old king suddenly grew rigid, and, with a faint cry, fell over upon his couch dead.

At this moment Ania entered the house hurriedly, and said, in an excited manner:

"Kawoa is addressing the chiefs. He says that you must not stay here, that he will be king, and that I am to be his wife. Come; you are needed."

"Do you know anything of poisons?" asked Charlie, quickly.

"Yes; I know of many. They are——"

But here she paused as she saw the cup in Charlie's hand and the spot on the couch drapery.

"Where did you find the cup?" she asked, quickly.

"At the head of the couch."

"Did you give father a drink of it?"

"No."

"Then it was Kawoa himself. The drink is poisoned."

"And the king is dead."

"Dead?" cried the girl, in terror.

"Yes."

At that moment there was a loud noise without, many talking at once, while drums beating and trumpets braying only increased the din.

"Come," said Ania, "there is no time to lose."

Charlie hurried out at once and stood in the midst of the assembly, his appearance causing considerable commotion.

He was arrayed in a flowing robe of white, his hair was bound back by a circlet of gold, and in his hand he held the staff carried by the king.

Striding forward, he ascended the steps of the throne, as yet unoccupied, and, turning upon the king's brothers, cried in a loud voice:

"You wicked men, I wonder that the vengeance of the great spirit does not fall and strike you dead."

Kawoa stepped forward, trembling with rage, and cried: "There is the man who would make slaves of you all. Will you listen to him, will you be fooled by him? No, I know that you——"

Charlie interrupted the angry chief, and said, boldly:

"Your king is dead, and I charge this man with his murder."

Kawoa grasped a spear and seemed about to rush forward, when Ania handed to Charlie the cup taken from the king's bedside.

"If this be not true," he cried, "let him drink of this cup before you all."

"It is the young white god who has poisoned our brother," cried the man, changing color.

"I said nothing of poisons," said Charlie, quickly.

Kawoa saw at once that he had committed himself, and instantly there arose a great clamor against him.

Trembling with rage, he flew at Charlie as the latter ascended the steps of the throne.

Ania was at hand, however, and as the angered man dashed forward she threw herself between him and Charlie, and hastily drawing a dagger from her bosom, struck at the villain.

In his mad haste he rushed right upon the weapon, and then staggered back.

Reeling as though shot, he fell at Ania's feet, while she stood above him, looking like an angry goddess.

Charlie paused at the last step, and, turning toward the people, said:

"King Mondono is dead, and I reign in his place. Salute your royal master, and dread to arouse his wrath."

Then he sat down in royal state, and while drums, gongs and trumpets sounded there arose a joyful shout of: "Long reign our king!" and Charlie felt that he had taken another step, and a long one, toward the accomplishment of his life's work.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SLAVER—A STRANGE PROPOSITION.

The first thing King Charlie did on his accession to the throne was to banish the late king's brothers, bidding them to leave the country before daybreak the next morning or forfeit their lives.

The command was obeyed, and the men disappeared, much to Charlie's satisfaction, as he knew if they remained they would always be a source of trouble to him.

During the time that Charlie had been with this strange people there had been no wars with the other tribes, but now, shortly after his accession, rumors came that a powerful people to the north of him were about to invade his territory.

He therefore went to work quietly preparing for war, strengthening the defenses of the town, and getting together all the fighting men in the kingdom.

Then he sent spies out, and when at last the enemy appeared in great numbers he was ready for them, and they found they had met their match.

They were defeated in a fierce battle that lasted one entire day, and a great many captives were taken, the number of the slain being also enormous.

After the rejoicings over the victory had ceased, the question arose as to the disposition to be made of the captives.

Charlie then learned that at certain times Portuguese vessels visited the settlement and took away the men captured in battle, to be made slaves of, and that there had long been a regular traffic in human lives between some of the native rulers and the whites.

It was this that had so incensed the people of King Mondono against all whites, for many of their tribe had been carried off by treacherous slavers, and made to endure all kinds of torture.

They would not scruple, however, to sell their enemies to the slavers, and runners had already been sent up and down the coast to look for Portuguese ships and invite a trade with their captains.

When Charlie learned this he became furious, and declared to the chiefs in council that the lawless traffic should cease, that they might trade with the Portuguese in gold, spices, ivory and anything else they wished, but not in human lives.

His speech raised a storm of disapprobation, but he held firmly to his resolution, and dared them to disobey him at the peril of their lives and all they held most dear.

They remembered how he had conquered them before, and trembled, but this did not seem as bad as their first offense, and they had always made slaves of their captive foes, though they had not always sold them to be taken away into bondage.

"Do this," cried Charlie, "and I will go away and leave you to your fate—to be made the sport of the angry gods, to be destroyed by your enemies, to be scattered far and wide, to be yourselves made slaves of, and to bitterly rue the day that you listened not to my warnings."

There were many black looks at these words, but no one dared to answer, dreading that perhaps, as before, they might behold the outward sign of the gods' displeasure.

Charlie said no more, but left the council and returned to his own residence to take counsel with himself how best to meet this new difficulty.

While thinking over many plans, and rejecting them all as impracticable, Ania came to him, and said, hurriedly:

"A ship has been sighted in the outer bay, and she is now moving toward the creek. Her signals show her to be the vessel of Dominca, the Portuguese trader."

"A slave dealer?" asked Charlie, quickly.

"Aye, and the craftiest of the race."

"Go to my chests and bring me two bars of gold," said the young man, hastily. "I will see this fellow."

"You will not sell the captives after all you have said?" cried the girl, anxiously.

"No, no. But do as I wish, for time presses."

The young king then secured his pistols and thrust them into a belt concealed beneath his cloak, summoned two attendants and bade them await him at the head of the creek with a large canoe, took the gold which Ania brought him, together with a purse of doubloons and guineas, and then said:

"If the chiefs seek me, tell them I have gone to meet this stranger."

Then he passed out of the apartment by the rear, being unseen by the chiefs in council, and hurried to the head of the creek, where a large canoe awaited him.

Entering this, he ordered the men to row him down the creek, at the mouth of which the Portuguese vessel was met with, just about to enter.

The anchors were let loose, and Charlie, being rowed alongside, was assisted to the deck, the captain coming forward to meet him.

"Do you speak English?" asked Charlie, without delay.

"Yes," said Dominca; "but what mystery is this? You are a white man. Where is the king, Mondono?"

"I am king here," answered Charlie, proudly, "and my will is law."

"Ah! Then I presume you have come to treat with me?"

"Yes."

"Well, how large a cargo of 'black ivory' do you wish to dispose of? I can take five hundred head, and will pay you well for them."

"I have none to sell," answered Charlie. "I wish to buy this vessel."

"What?" cried the slaver in amazement. "You wish to engage in the trade yourself?"

"No, for I am resolved that never more shall she be used for the lawless traffic. Name your price, sir, and it is yours."

Then, as an earnest of his sincerity, Charlie threw the bars of gold upon the deck, while the captain and crew gazed at him in wonder.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MEETING OF THE BROTHERS.

"Are you serious?" asked Dominca, when he had recovered his first surprise.

"Yes."

"Then come into my cabin and we will talk the matter over."

"I can do so here as well as there. Will you sell the ship as she stands?"

"You wish to engage in trade?"

"Yes; but not in the slave trade."

"You are English, then?"

"No, American."

Dominca laughed as he replied:

"And that is where slavery flourishes the most."

"The more reason why I should wish to put it down. What do you want for this vessel?"

"Five thousand pounds and a passage to some civilized land."

"The money shall be yours. Bear witness, all of you," turning to the officers and crew, "that this is a bargain."

"You will make more money in slaves than in other trade," laughed the Portuguese, "and I would advise you to go into it."

"I am not seeking advice," returned Charlie, "but a vessel. Now, then," he added, "who of you shall sail with me?"

There were two or three English-speaking men on board, and these interpreted Charlie's words to the rest.

"They all say they will go with you," said one of these, a man called Jack Tower, "provided they are well paid. They are sick of the slave trade, as men regard them as little better than pirates."

"I will pay them five pounds a month and their keep and grog, and they will not be in the slave trade."

This announcement was hailed with cheers, and Charlie now asked for a sheet of paper, upon which he wrote a note to Ania, having already taught the girl to read and write English.

The note instructed her to send him so much gold, in bars and coin, by the messengers he would send, and was delivered to an attendant to carry, the man returning in a canoe.

The young king then accompanied Dominca to his cabin, and over a bottle of wine told his story—or such part of it as he thought best—the Portuguese being greatly astonished at the recital.

He tried to swerve Charlie from his purpose, and hinted that they go in partnership, showing how easy it would be to entrap a whole ship's load of slaves on board and then sail away with them.

Charlie rejected the man's advances, and by this time the messenger had returned with the gold, and our hero paid the Portuguese the price asked for the vessel, besides making a present of the two bars of gold he had first shown him.

To every man he also gave a golden doubloon, and to the officers five, and then the formal transfer of the vessel was made, and all hands hailed him as the owner and captain.

By this time some of the chiefs had rowed out, and, inviting them on board, Charlie told them that he was the owner, that the dealing in men's lives was at an end, and that if they disregarded his wishes he would sail away, never to return, and leave them to the wrath of their enemies.

The chiefs were much impressed, and no further objections to his wishes were made.

For a month the vessel remained in the harbor, the time being occupied in putting in a cargo, and in getting ready for departure.

The prisoners taken in battle were sent back to their homes, and, the chief of that tribe dying about that time, this act gave Charlie increased power, so that he was appointed ruler over both nations.

At last, having made all his preparations, the young king told his people that he was going away, but that he would soon return, selecting a council of wise men to rule during his absence.

Then to the faithful Ania he said, enfolding her in his arms:

"Beloved, will you trust yourself with me, follow me through trial and triumph, through danger and success?"

"Aye, my own, I am yours in life and in death!" she answered, clinging to him.

"So be it; then you shall make this voyage with me."

"But you will return."

"Yes."

So the young king sailed away with his promised bride, for whom an elegant cabin had been fitted up, and Charlie took command, for he had learned much after leaving home, and, with but little assistance, could have sailed a vessel around the globe.

He took his cargo to the Cape of Good Hope, disposed of it to advantage, sent a vessel to America, then took another to Australia, and then back to Cape Town, and thence again to Java, and after that back to the Cape.

Here, having acquired a fortune, he went to the South African diamond fields, where he was lost to sight for an entire year, having left Ania with an English family at the Cape.

He returned at last, when she had given him up for dead, and expressed his intention of going back to his kingdom and his people.

His ship had, meanwhile, taken a voyage to England and back, and now, with an entirely new crew, he set sail for the shore where he had first been shipwrecked.

He took a party of missionaries with him, and after a royal welcome by the people, who had prospered as they never had before, he installed the ministers among them, and sought to educate them to higher things than they had yet known.

At the end of another six months he once more set sail, stopping at the Cape, exchanging cargoes, fitting out two other ships, and then proceeding to England.

Arriving in London, he sold his diamonds, and realized a fortune from them alone, besides disposing of his cargo at a profit, and hearing good reports from his other vessels.

At this time London society was greatly exercised over a man who had suddenly appeared in polite circles, and who was reputed to be richer than the Rothschilds themselves.

He lived at the best hotel, drove every afternoon in Hyde Park in most magnificent style, appearing each day with a new equipage and horses, dined at the best cafes, attended only the most aristocratic clubs, was present at all receptions given to royalty, and had boxes at all the leading theatres, going to three or four of an evening, and attending also the most fashionable balls and reunions.

At the opera, attired in full dress, he occupied a prominent box, its only other occupant being a lady richly dressed, but

so closely veiled that not a single feature could be distinguished.

The lady attracted more attention and curiosity than did the gentleman, and rumor ran wild concerning her.

The gentleman was known simply as Hope, but whether foreign or native, lord or potentate, banker or adventurer, no one knew, for, though possessed of princely wealth and charming in his manners, he never spoke of his affairs to strangers.

The lady, however, was a still greater puzzle, for no one knew where she lived, whither she came, whence she went or what she was like. And her sudden appearance became the talk of the town.

Hope had horses without number, owned pleasure yachts and steam launches, had a house in town, and a villa at Richmond.

One morning an advertisement appeared in the Standard for sailors to go to China on a merchant vessel, applicants being requested to call upon Goodenow & Co., Little Bishop street, east.

Charlie Hope sat in an inner office of a dingy building near the River Thames, looking over some papers, when a boy put his head in at the door, and said, briefly:

"Another one, sir. Will you see him?"

"Yes," was the short answer, and the boy withdrew his head as quickly as he had presented it.

In another moment a man, something under thirty-five in age, but more than that in appearance, entered the room.

He was roughly clad, wore a full, tangled beard, wherein the gray hairs predominated, and on his face was a tired, even hunted look.

"Are you a seaman?" asked Hope, without looking up.

The man nodded, but made no answer.

"What is your name, age and previous position, and where have you sailed?"

"I am known as John Richards, and have been boatswain and carpenter on——"

Charlie Hope suddenly looked up, stared the man full in the face, and said:

"That is not your name!"

The other flushed to the roots of his hair, and Charlie continued:

"Your name is Harold Hope, and you fled from New York between seven and eight——"

"In mercy's name!" cried the other, now turning pale, "who are you?"

"Charlie Hope, your brother, the richest boy in the world, and the avenger of yours and my father's dishonor."

"Charlie alive! Thank heavens!" and another moment the two brothers were clasped in a strong embrace.

CHAPTER IX.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE—HOME AGAIN—A RECOGNITION.

The two brothers had much to talk about, so much, in fact, that the clerks of Goodenow & Co. wondered what the junior partner saw in that rough-looking man that they should be closeted together so long.

"Tell me, Hal," said Charlie, before anything else was said, "you were not guilty, were you?"

"No, as I live, I was not, but that villain Hurd and his rascally tool Thatcher, had me in a hole, and I was obliged to flee or suffer arrest and disgrace."

"Arrest, perhaps, but not disgrace, if you were innocent. Could you not have exposed their complicity?"

"No, for the proofs were all against me, and yet I swear to you, by all I have suffered in these past years, that I was guiltless of the crime charged against me."

"Why have you not written?"

"I thought there was no use in it."

"There was not," answered Charlie, sadly. "Father is dead and Avice is worse than dead, for she married Hurd. This much I have learned through my agents, though I have not been home for five years."

Charlie then told of his many remarkable adventures on land and sea, and of his purpose to one day repay the villain for all he had suffered.

"And you, Hal," he asked; "what have you done all these years?"

"Oh, I drifted about, served in the army and at sea, have been wounded and at the point of death in hospitals, have been well off and have then lost all, have been in nearly every quarter of the globe, except my old home, and at last

found myself in London, poor and worn out with battling unsuccessfully against fate."

"Until you found me, Hal. But now all is changed, and you will regain the place you once held."

"Perhaps," answered Harold, wearily.

"Listen to me," said Charlie. "It is to these two men—Jasper Hurd and Rannond Thatcher, his accomplice—that we, and all who bear our name, owe our misfortunes. They have made us exiles—without a home, without a name. Tell me, is there nothing we can do to requite all this?"

"Do!" hissed Harold. "Aye, there is plenty to do, had we the means, but I am penniless, and you—"

"I am rich beyond your wildest imagination," cried Charlie, "but I will spend my last dollar ere the villain shall escape me. I will hunt him to the end of the earth and show him no mercy till he is as low as I when condemned to die by the savages on the African coast."

"Then I will help you," cried Harold. "The greedy shark, the gluttonous vulture, the hungry waves of the ocean, the famished wolf, the bloodthirsty hyena, all these shall be less merciless than I!"

"Good! Give me your hand upon it," and the brothers clasped hands in a grip so strong that a Hercules might have winced under it, but they, having their hearts in the work of vengeance, felt no more than the pressure of an infant's hands in their own.

"And you are rich?" said Harold, presently.

"Rich! I could buy the crown jewels; I possess diamonds worth a king's ransom; I have ships in every part of the globe; last week I made a million dollars by a lucky rise in stocks; yesterday I made as much more on the American market; to-morrow, if I would, I could break the Bank of France. Rich! I am the richest boy in the world!"

All this was uttered in no boasting tones, but in a quiet, matter-of-fact way that brought conviction with every word uttered.

"What have you been doing, then, with all this wealth?" asked Harold.

"Doing? I have been waiting till he who has wronged us grows fat with ill-gotten wealth, that his fall may be the greater. I have been waiting for you, and now I have found you."

"Would you had found me before," answered Harold, sadly.

"Let us waste no words in vain regrets," said Charlie. "The time has now come when we must work."

"What shall you do?"

"Sail for America at once."

"But your vessels?"

"They will take care of themselves."

There was no steamer sailing for America inside of ten days, but the next day it was reported that the mysterious Hope, in one of the whimsical fancies peculiar to him, had bought and refitted the large and elegant steam yacht belonging to the Duke of Blank, and would sail for America, or anywhere else, according to his notion, the next day.

Hundreds went to the docks to see the nabob sail, and to catch a glimpse of him, and perhaps also of the mysterious lady who had so often accompanied him, but all were doomed to disappointment, for the yacht had sailed in the night.

At this moment the brothers were at breakfast in the exquisitely appointed cabin, the vessel being in charge of the sailing master.

Harold was about to make some remark when the door of one of the staterooms opened and a lady appeared.

She was of olive complexion, and wonderfully beautiful, and Harold gazed spell-bound as the entrancing vision met his gaze.

"My wife!" said Charlie, rising from his seat and courteously taking Ania's hand. "My brother Harold," he added, with a wave of his disengaged hand. "I trust we shall all be friends here."

"My husband's brother shall be next to himself in my esteem," said the princess, with a low bow and a smile like that of the rising sun kissing the gentle waves of the ocean.

"I thought," said Harold, somewhat embarrassed, "that you told me Ania came from Africa."

"From Africa, indeed," returned Charlie, "but from a country whose civilization dates back for forty centuries. Did you think my wife was a savage?" he added, with a gay laugh.

"Not exactly," answered Harold, smiling, "but I was certainly not prepared to see so much beauty and intelligence combined."

Ania blushed, and then the conversation ran upon general topics, on all of which the lady seemed well informed.

The voyage proved a pleasant one in all respects, for although they met with some heavy weather, the yacht was so luxurious, and so well handled, thanks to Charlie's knowledge and his suggestions to the sailing master, that they experienced little or no discomfort.

At last they arrived in New York, and Charlie hired a house in a fashionable quarter, his horses and carriages being expected by the next steamer, for in those days more importance was attached to a man bringing such articles from abroad than buying them at home.

It was not long before the fame of the millionaire Englishman got abroad, and every one was anxious to cultivate his acquaintance.

One night, at a public reception to some great man, Hope suddenly said to his brother, as they were standing in an ante-room looking out upon the throng beyond:

"There! Look there! Do you see that man—the tall one with the very black whiskers and the wicked smile?"

"Yes," said Harold; "but why do you look at him so fixedly?"

"Don't you know him?"

"No."

"Then I do, as well as though I saw the scar—the mark left by the seething iron in the palm of his right hand. Do you see how he remains gloved—the villain? For all that I know you, Jasper Hurd!" he hissed beneath his breath, "and you cannot escape me when the time comes to strike the blow!"

CHAPTER X.

THE BANKER AND HIS VISITORS.

Jasper Hurd, the rich banker, sat in his private office before a table littered with papers, letters and all sorts of documents, for he was a man of business, and had a great many letters to attend to at all times.

He was writing a letter of great importance, and one which he did not care to trust to his private secretary.

Suddenly, however, he paused, and, looking up, saw that some one had entered, and now stood before him.

"I thought I said that I was not to be disturbed, Baker," he said, in angry tone.

"So you did, sir, but Mr. Thatcher has something—"

"Why can't Thatcher choose a more convenient opportunity if he wishes to speak to me?" cried the banker. "Tell him to wait."

"If you please, sir," said the clerk, humbly, "he says that it is an affair of the greatest—"

"I don't care what it is—let him wait," cried the other impatiently, and Baker at once retired, shutting the door after him.

"That fellow is getting to be a terrible nuisance," muttered Hurd, sitting back in his carved easy-chair and puffing away vigorously. "I must get rid of him before he becomes too important."

Then he went on with his writing, and presently folded and put his letter in an envelope, which he then sealed and directed.

At that moment the door again opened and Baker once more entered.

"Mr. Wiggins, of Higgins & Wiggins," said the clerk. "He wishes to see you about that matter—"

"Show him in," interrupted the banker.

A moment later a tall, spare man, wearing a long gray beard, blue glasses and shabby clothes, entered, placed his hat and stick on the desk, wheeled a chair alongside that occupied by the banker, and sat down with an air of familiarity.

When Baker had gone out, Mr. Wiggins said in a sharp, nasal tone:

"About that mining stock, Hurd? Do you want it?"

"Yes, if you'll sell at a fair figure and give me the whole lot."

"Can't let you have but half, and that at par."

"Why, the stuff is not known on the market."

"But we're going to boom it, my dear sir, and in a month it will be trebled in value. You can rely on what Higgins & Wiggins tell you, every time."

"Yes, I have seen the parties to whom you refer, and am satisfied with their recommendation. But if I take up the stock I want the whole of it."

"Very sorry, sir, but Mr. Puffhausen, from the Cape, has half."

"Puffhausen, the wealthy Hollander, the man who has lately come from the African gold-fields? You say he has half of it?"

"Yes, and whatever he takes hold of is sure to succeed."

"I should say so," replied Hurd, with a wince. "He bulled stocks yesterday and I lost a hundred thousand by being on the wrong side of the market. That fellow must be as rich as Croesus, by the way."

"So he is."

"I would like to meet him," said Hurd. "I am a bit of a financier, but he goes ahead of me."

"You'd better be with him than against him, I reckon," laughed Wiggins. "Will you take half of this new stock?"

"Yes," returned Hurd, eagerly, and the bargain was quickly made, and the certificates transferred.

Mr. Wiggins was about leaving, when Baker entered and announced that Mr. Puffhausen from Africa desired to see the banker.

Hurd requested that he be shown in at once, and a man of young but distinguished appearance entered, Mr. Wiggins taking his departure.

"I hear that we ran against each other in the market yesterday, Mr. Hurd," said the stranger. "I am sorry for that, and I have something to propose."

"Is it to take half the stock of the new Bonanza Mine in the West?"

"No, though that is a good scheme."

"You will be pleased to learn, then, that I have just invested in that, through Higgins & Wiggins."

"You have?" echoed the other, with a smile. "I congratulate you. What I wish to propose, however, is for you to take part of the stock of the Puffhausen gold mine in South Africa. Here is a sample of the ore."

With that the stranger threw a handful of rich gold ore on the table, and said, carelessly:

"I do not ask you to go into this thing without investigating it. And, by the way, as you do a banking business, I wish to make a small deposit."

"As you please, sir," answered Hurd, with a smile.

The stranger then took out a thick pocketbook and threw it on the table, the sides opening and disclosing a number of gold certificates for five thousand dollars each.

Hurd looked very much astonished, but his surprise was increased when Puffhausen said, carelessly:

"There is half a million now, and I will give you more by and by. I don't want the trouble of carrying it."

Hurd's eyes glistened, for here was a depositor worth having, a man to whom a half million was a trifle being something of a variety, even in his business.

"Please give me a receipt," added Puffhausen. "I shall not possibly want this, but then that is business."

Hurd made out a receipt, and as he was signing his name Puffhausen said, as if it were of no particular importance:

"You have a bad scar on the palm of your right hand. A cut, I suppose. You Americans are great fighters, I hear."

Hurd turned deathly pale, and his hand shook so that he blotted the receipt badly.

"Let me make out another," he said, regaining his composure after an effort.

"That will do well enough," answered Puffhausen, pressing a blotting-pad upon the receipt and putting it in his pocket. "Please count my deposit."

Hurd did this, finding the amount correct, his excitement increasing so that his hand trembled even more violently than before.

Puffhausen did not appear to notice this, however, but, taking a jeweled cigar-case from a side pocket, asked permission to smoke.

"Have you ever been to the Cape?" he asked, presently, as he sat puffing the fragrant smoke from his lips.

"No," answered Hurd, in a hard tone, as he busied himself over some papers.

"Ah, you are busy, I see," remarked the other. "Well, I will not delay you. By the way, if you wish to investigate this gold mine—I will leave the samples of ore—you might see Mr. Esperance, the rich Frenchman, at the Terrace Hotel, uptown. You have probably heard of him."

"The gentleman who has been cutting such a dash in society for the last month?"

"Yes."

"Why, I have heard of him, but do not know him."

"If you have time you might run out to Africa, since you

have never been there," added Puffhausen, carelessly as ever, "and investigate."

Hurd delved deeper into his papers, and the millionaire from the Cape took his leave, thinking to himself as he went out:

"The shot told, but I will leave his reputation alone for the present. My first blow must be at his pocket."

CHAPTER XI.

THE PAST RECALLED—AN UNPLEASANT MEETING.

When the rich stranger had departed Jasper Hurd looked up in a frightened manner and muttered:

"Was that an accident only? The noting of the scar on my hand, the suggestion to go to Africa—were those remarks carelessly made, or was there a deep design in them?"

This man comes from the Cape, is a Hollander, and yet speaks our language with no trace of an accent. What does he know about my life in the wilderness? Pshaw! they are all dead, and he cannot know."

Then he rang his bell violently, and when Baker appeared he said, in sharp, quick tones:

"Tell Thatcher I will see him."

In a few moments Raymond Thatcher, changed but little in the five years since we last saw him, came in, sat on the edge of a table, and said, impudently:

"You don't mind keeping a fellow waiting any length of time, do you, old man?"

"Do you know Puffhausen?" asked Hurd, without replying to the question.

"That Dutchman who does what he wants with the market? Yes, I know him."

"Is he a Hollander?"

"I believe so. They say he has traveled everywhere and speaks twenty languages, and all perfectly."

"He wants me to go in with him in a gold mine scheme."

"Do it, then, for he's a regular Midas, they say, and whatever he touches turns to gold."

"I must look up the thing first. Esperance, at the Terrace, on Fifth avenue, near the park, is interested, too."

"The rich Frenchman? Why, that man must be worth millions. He has boxes at two opera houses and all the leading theatres; he employs an army of servants; he has a perfect troop of horses, and the jewels his wife wears are worth a kingdom."

"But nobody has yet seen her face?"

"No, for she is always veiled. I tell you, old pal, if that fellow is in this thing, and Puffhausen, too, you want to take hold of it."

"I thought of doing so," answered Hurd, laying his open hand on the table half unconsciously.

"What have you been doing?" cried Thatcher, suddenly. "Have you hurt your hand again? That old scar burns like fire."

"That's what I have to remember young Hope by!" hissed Hurd. "Yes, it pains me intensely, but I have done nothing to it."

"You'd better keep it gloved," laughed Thatcher. "They say such things ache or bleed when one's enemy is near, but young Hope has been dead these five years."

"You are certain?" hissed Hurd.

"Of course. The Roderick Dhu has never been heard of, and none of her officers or crew have ever turned up. She probably foundered at sea."

"And Hal has never returned?"

"No. What do you care if he does?"

"Nothing," was the contemptuous answer. "Do you suppose I fear a couple of boys? My wealth protects me."

"Yes, you made an unexpected stroke of luck when you opened old Egbert into turning everything over to you. Don't leath came just at the right time, too, and as both boys were away, you had the whole field to yourself."

"You don't suppose I schemed for nothing, do you?" laughed Hurd. "My well-laid plans deserved all the success they had."

"But how does your lady wife regard you since you have become so rich?" laughed Thatcher. "Does she ever ask after her brothers?"

"Avice? No, she has other things to interest her."

"Her child, for instance," added the accomplice.

"Never mind him," growled Hurd, looking black. "I have

something to suggest. This Dutchman has deposited with me half a million dollars and has taken my receipt."

Raymond Thatcher looked steadily at Hurd for a few moments in silence, and then he said lightly:

"You want the receipt as well as the half million?"

"Yes."

"I'll see what I can do," returned Thatcher. "A robbery is all that will be necessary, I suppose. The other would make too much of a stir."

Hurd's countenance became livid as he hissed:

"No—no; no more of that!"

"You are thinking of Africa, I suppose," laughed Thatcher.

"Silence!" gasped Hurd, bringing his hand so heavily down upon the table that it began to bleed in the palm.

"Don't do that," laughed Thatcher. "You know the skin is tender on that old scar, and the least thing causes it to bleed."

"You are always bringing up that matter," hissed Hurd.

"Yes, and sometimes the little difficulty in the diamond districts of the Cape, too."

Hurd scowled more terribly than ever, and said angrily:

"What do you do it for?"

"Only to show you that I know too much to be shaken."

"I never intended to shake you, as you call it."

"You might, however, and so I just want to remind you occasionally that it wouldn't be a wise proceeding."

With that Thatcher swung himself down carelessly to the floor, turned on his heel, and walked out.

"He knows too much for me to afford to quarrel with him," muttered Hurd, "and he is a valuable fellow besides."

Just then Thatcher stuck his head in at the door and said with a laugh:

"Your rich Dutchman was more careful than you supposed. He has taken a regular certificate of deposit and a book, in true business style."

"I have changed my mind, anyhow," returned Hurd. "We must not kill the goose that lays the golden eggs."

"No; get all you can out of him and then fail," laughed the other, as he disappeared.

The banker was kept busy for some little time after this, and at last, at the close of regular business hours, went out to lunch, having ordered his carriage to be ready to take him home at four o'clock.

As he passed down the street after leaving the banking-house, he turned his steps toward a quiet, narrow little lane, where there was an excellent chop-house kept on the European plan.

Just as he was about to turn the corner a man came up from the lane and stood directly in front of him.

He was dressed as a sailor, his face was weather-beaten and scarred, his hands were rough and horny, his eyes were bloodshot, his breath smelled of liquor, and his whole appearance was anything but prepossessing.

He suddenly stopped, looked the banker in the face, and laying a rough hand on the latter's arm, familiarly said:

"Scuttle and sink me if it ain't Jack Jasper turned up again! Give us your hand, old shipmate. I've got nothing agin ye for what you did to poor Tom, providin' you come down handsome."

The banker turned pale, and, hurrying by the man, muttered to himself in hard, constrained tones:

"Joe Holden alive after all these years. If the villain takes it into his head to speak, there may be a job yet for Thatcher to do. Only when that fellow is dead can I know what real safety is."

CHAPTER XII.

SETTING THE SNARES.

"Take my card to Mr. Esperance, if you please."

It was Jasper Hurd who gave the above direction to one of the servants at the Terrace Hotel, the man having informed him that the French gentleman was in.

The fellow departed, and presently returned to conduct the visitor to the Frenchman's apartments.

These occupied one entire floor of the hotel, and were fitted up in most sumptuous style, Mr. Esperance rightly earning the reputation of living like a prince.

He was a man of apparently about twenty-five, with closely-cropped hair and a waxed mustache, elegantly dressed and charming in manner, though one could detect

something of reserve, as though he might have said more had he chosen.

"To what do I owe the honaire of thees visit, monsieur?" he asked, with a decided foreign accent.

"I wish to investigate the Puffhausen mine in South Africa."

"Ah, you think that maybe the stories of eet are too strong, too extravagant, monsieur?"

"That is about it."

"Then I will show you somezing," and the Frenchman opened an ebony cabinet and revealed a great mass of almost pure gold, which he heaped upon the table.

"Zis is all from the mine, mon ami, and I haf brought over a sheep-load beside," he said, quietly and with none of the volatile airs generally adopted by Frenchmen.

"You sall see the invoice, ze list of what you call ze consignees, and you sall see zat there ees more of ze same stuff yet in ze mines."

"Then you have faith in it?"

"Mon Dieu! I have so moche zat I wish I might own ze whole mine, but madame do not wish zat I put my money all in one place, and I yield to her wish."

"Does Mynheer Puffhausen own the mine, or the most of it?"

"Ah, now, he gif hees name to eet, for ze good luck, zat ees all. He own a little of eet and I tell him to sell it to me; but no; he say he keep it."

"He is rich enough to buy the whole mine."

"Ma foi—oui-oui, but zere is a fancy in hees mind zat a lit' ees bettaire than much, and he wish to have ze stoke divided to a numbaire of peopl'."

"How much is still unsold?"

"Only a lit' bit. I should sink not more than a half million dollaire."

Here was another man who regarded half a million dollars as a mere bagatelle.

"That will do," replied Hurd, as indolently as possible. "I will take that much."

"It ees so little, not worse the trouble to sink ovaire," added the Frenchman, with a laugh; "but eef you wish eet, ze stoke can be transferred in a few days."

"I would like it at once," returned Hurd, trying to conceal his anxiety.

"You haf been in Africa, monsieur, perhaps, and know zat ze gold is very rich? You are a judge, you know ze goot sing ven you see him?"

"Yes, I know a good thing when I see it," answered Hurd, trying to compose himself.

"And wizout going to Africa to see wiz your eyes. Zat is indeed wonderful, monsieur. I sink you haf been zere some day."

"No, I have never been out of this country," answered Hurd, "but I have seen many kinds of ore, and know that this is exceedingly rich."

"You should go and see ze place, my dear sare; eet is very wild—what you call romantique. Ze diamond district ees not far away, and zere you vill hear some strange stories, stories of crime zat you would hardly credeet. Do you know, monsieur, zere are many bad men in ze world?"

"I believe so," muttered the other, under his breath.

"You would more zan believe eet eef you could hear ze stories I haf heard, monsieur. Men haf killed zeir own brozers for gold in zat countree, and he zat lifes in ze wilds takes hees life wiz him."

"Yes, I believe so," answered the banker, mechanically.

"Some day I sall tell you a story of a poor man who lose hees life, and it is never discover who do eet. Ze tale is ver' strange. Ze man was called Tom somesing or ozer, I do not remembaire, and he was keeled by hees frien'. I do not know hees name."

"No doubt of great interest," muttered the other, hoarsely; "but I must hasten, my dear sir, as I have an appointment."

"No excuses are necessaire, mon ami, I am sure," returned the Frenchman.

"You will see that this stock is kept for me till to-morrow?"

"Oui-oui for a week, if monsieur desire eet."

"To-morrow will be sufficient," and with that Hurd bowed himself out.

"What fatality is this?" he muttered, as he re-entered his carriage and was driven toward home. "Three times to-day has that affair been brought to my mind when I had thought it was forever forgotten."

He rode a while in silence, and then he mused again:

"And that worthless Joe has to cross my path again, to add to it all. He was Tom's friend and escaped. He must be silenced. Rum will do it—that and a little money."

That the banker's conscience or fear could not be silenced, however, was evident enough from his perturbed looks, and at the dinner-table he scarcely spoke.

He went to the opera with his wife that evening, and saw Esperance and a richly-attired lady in the opposite box.

While the Frenchman seemed to enjoy everything to the utmost, however, the banker hardly heard the music and was ill at ease, finally leaving the house when the performance was two-thirds finished.

That night Mr. Esperance entertained a gentleman and lady in his private parlor, and seemed much more proficient in the English language than he had formerly been.

"We'll hook him, Hal," said the wealthy host.

"That heavy deposit of yours came in handy, I presume?"

"Yes, but I shall make another soon and lead him deeper."

"Then there is the western mining scheme."

"There will be plenty more traps to catch what money he has," laughed the other, with a look so hard and unforgiving that the lady shuddered.

"You will ruin him?" she said.

"Yes, and then he will know that Harold Hope, whom he led astray, that Charlie Hope, whom he banished, have been avenged."

Nothing more was said upon that subject and the evening passed gayly.

The next day Jasper Hurd came into possession of stock in the Puffhausen gold mine, in South Africa, to the extent of half a million.

The same day Puffhausen himself deposited a trifle of a couple of hundred thousand, and he and Hurd made a lucky hit on the stock market.

Two or three days passed, and the brothers were one morning closeted in their private office, known as the branch of Higgins & Wiggins, of London.

"Do you wish the blow to fall at once?" asked Harold.

"Yes, but not with full force. The agony must be prolonged. He must be attacked first in his purse, then in his pleasures, then in his home, then in his reputation, and then——"

"What then?" asked Harold.

"Then let him seek his death, for less merciless than the fierce savages among whom I was cast shall he find me."

"Then your next move——"

"Is to tell him how I discovered the history of his life at the Cape."

CHAPTER XIII.

VENGEANCE AHEAD IN THE RACE.

The grandstand of the Manhattan Racing Association was crowded with the beauty and fashion of the metropolis.

The great event of the season was about to take place—the race for a purse of five thousand dollars and the championship of the turf.

All the crack horses were entered, and betting ran high, immense amounts being given and taken on favorite horses.

Hurd, the banker, had entered his well-known stallion, Gold King, and the betting was greatly in his favor.

Other horses had been entered, among them one called Vengeance, totally unknown, and entered by an anonymous backer.

In the betting one hundred to one was offered against this animal, and no one cared to back him even against such odds.

Hurd, Thatcher, and a few friends were gathered in the clubhouse of the association, ready for the race to begin, when in sauntered Puffhausen and a friend, and joined the party.

Wine was ordered, cigars followed, and the utmost sociability prevailed.

"Are you betting, Puffhausen?" asked Hurd.

"Ah, yes, a little," replied the other, carelessly.

"Have you taken Gold King?"

"Ah, I never show my hand, friend Hurd," said the rich Dutchman, "and I would not advise you to show yours."

Hurd colored, and as if taking the remark literally, hurriedly withdrew his right hand, which he had placed on Puffhausen's arm, and hid it from sight.

"They are about to start," said Puffhausen's friend.

"Twenty to one on Vengeance!"

"You will lose," said Hurd, "but I will take you."

"I shall not lose," replied the other, decidedly, "and I'll make you another bet on the same terms that Gold King does lose."

"Put me down for a hundred dollars on each bet."

"Certainly."

"Will you bet on Gold King, Puffhausen?" asked Hurd.

"My bets are all made," was the reply. "Now I am watching the fight."

"He's the luckiest fellow I ever saw," whispered Thatcher to Hurd. "If you could find out how he is betting you could make a fortune."

"He has taken Gold King, of course. He is bound to win the race, and all other bets are foolish."

The horses were now off, and the liveliest interest prevailed.

For a time Gold King led, but at the half distance pole one or two led him by a neck.

The excitement increased, and bets were made against Gold King, all of which Hurd accepted promptly.

At the three-quarter pole Gold King and Vengeance were neck and neck, all others being left behind.

"What's that?" hissed Hurd. "Vengeance even with the King? A horse that nobody knows nor has ever heard of! Pshaw! He will be beaten!"

"I think not," said Puffhausen, quietly.

This was the first time he had expressed an opinion on the relative merits of the horses.

"I'll lay you a hundred to one that Gold King beats him!" cried Hurd, excitedly.

"I'll take it. Here are a thousand dollars."

"Done for ten thousand, if you like!" cried Hurd, in a passion.

"One is enough," was the quiet answer, as the wager was dotted down.

"Fool!" hissed Thatcher in Hurd's ear. "That young man's luck is phenomenal. You will lose."

"We shall see," hissed Hurd, grating his teeth.

At this moment a wild shout arose from the assembled multitude.

The excitement had passed beyond all bounds, and men seemed to have gone mad.

Vengeance had suddenly shot ahead of Gold King, and now led by a full length.

There were more surprises than this in store.

Gold King suddenly seemed to have lost heart, and fell behind so rapidly that three or four other horses passed him in quick succession.

His driver did his best to urge him on, but all in vain, for he utterly refused to exert himself, and presently went dead lame, and was passed by every horse in the field.

Vengeance had carried off the prize, and the fortunate ones who had bet on him suddenly found themselves in possession of more money than they had ever dreamed of.

Hurd had lost hundreds of thousands of dollars on this unfortunate race, and was in no pleasant mood in consequence.

It was not the loss of the money that troubled him so much as the wound to his pride.

His horse, an acknowledged favorite, had been beaten by an unknown and could never more be pitted against the favorites, having lost caste forever.

"I told you it was foolish to bet against that rich Hollander," said Thatcher, after the race, as he and Hurd sat alone in a private room at the clubhouse. "He turns to gold everything he touches. Vengeance was too much for you, and I knew he would be when Puffhausen backed him."

"Vengeance!" hissed Hurd, turning livid. "I have laughed at it. Is it now overtaking me?"

Then he gulped down a huge glass of brandy, and, jumping up, walked to and fro excitedly.

Meantime, Puffhausen and his friend were riding home in an elegant little dog-cart behind a pair of spanking trotters, and discussing the events of the afternoon.

"His pleasures are beginning to be a curse to him," said Puffhausen. "This race has hurt his pride."

"As well as his pocket," laughed the other.

"Pshaw! I do not care for that. The loss of the money is nothing; it is the blow to his pride that cuts."

"And still he does not suspect?"

"No, nor shall he till the end."

"What will be your next move?"

"To attack him in his reputation. That assailed, his credit as a business man next needs attention."

That night the palatial residence of the wealthy Puffhausen was crowded with a brilliant assemblage.

Hurd was present, as were many of the richest and most influential men of New York.

The host was more agreeable than ever, and seemed to have exerted his utmost to please his guests.

Late in the evening, when the utmost freedom reigned, and everybody seemed on the most cordial terms with each other, the sound of a violin was heard just outside the large open windows in front of the house.

The musicians had gone down to supper, and there was no one to take their places until one of the guests said, laughingly:

"Let us have up this wandering fiddler, and see how he can play. Our host is so philanthropic that he can certainly not object."

Everybody was in favor of sending for the strange violinist outside, and a servant was at once dispatched to bring him in.

The man presently appeared, and seemed not at all dazzled at the brilliant scene before him, though he was old, poorly dressed, and careworn in looks.

"You have sent for me," said the man, "and I appreciate the attention and will try to interest you."

Then he stood in the center of the great saloon and began to play a melancholy air, the pathos of which touched all hearts.

After a time he said, laying down his violin and looking around upon the company:

"I have met with many strange adventures in my day, and have traveled through many countries. May I tell you some of my adventures?"

"By all means," answered several.

"Then, to start with, I will relate the strange history of a man who was a mate of mine in the African diamond fields."

The listeners seemed much interested, and sat about in a circle, while the strange story-teller, still standing, and refusing the chair which some one offered him, began his tale, to which Hurd, the banker, listened spell-bound, and with a fascination which he seemed unable to shake off.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE WANDERER'S STORY.

"My name, to begin with, is Dick Fleming, and my home is in this city, which, however, I have not visited for ten years until to-night, being a wanderer, as I have said.

"Ten years ago I left here as a common sailor on a vessel bound for the Cape of Good Hope, where I expected to make a fortune.

"On the vessel was a passenger by the name of Jack Jasper, a dare-devil sort of a fellow, who was always gambling, quarreled with every one, and was anything but a favorite.

"Tom, my mate, as good a fellow as ever lived, and a sailor like myself, one day incurred the displeasure of this Jack Jasper, and the latter swore at him and threatened to thrash him.

"Tom had run against him while doing something on board, and had promptly apologized, but Jasper was not satisfied with this and threatened Tom, as I say.

"An apology is the best thing I can give you, as a gentleman," said Tom, in reply to the angry words of Jasper, "but as a ruffian I can give you a sound beating, and I'll do it, too, when we are on more equal terms than we can be on board this ship."

"Then Tom walked away and went about his duty, while I told him not to talk to the man, who might make trouble for him with the captain if he chose.

"Tom said he wouldn't; and though he received many black looks and many insulting words from Jack Jasper after that, he never so much as by a wink let on that he noticed the fellow.

"At Capetown Tom and I left the vessel, and, with our money in our pockets, set out for the diamond fields, I with my fiddle under my arm to while away the time and perhaps earn an honest penny now and then.

"Well, the time passed away, and later on Tom and I were in camp, sharing a hut together and working like good fellows to get rich, as many another had done before us.

"I made more money with my fiddle-playing for the boys to dance to than I did by digging, but Tom was lucky and made several good finds, so that in a couple of months he was worth thousands of dollars.

"At this time we were both of us surprised to see come into camp one day Jack Jasper, the sporty passenger, together with a fellow that we did not know, but who we soon learned was called Joe Holden.

"He and Jasper got to work on an abandoned claim not far from our hut, and it was not long after settling that Jasper began to pick a quarrel with Tom.

"Jack Jasper," said Tom, throwing down his coat, "I told you once that when we could meet face to face on an equal footing I would thrash you for your impudence to me. This is the time and the place for me to keep my word."

"Jasper tried to make out as if he was too much of a gentleman to fight with such as Tom, and that the horsewhip was what he wanted.

"There are no gentlemen here," said I. "We are all men, and if you are one you'll defend yourself, and prove which of you is the better."

"The boys all assented to this, and Jasper saw that if he backed out he would be considered a coward, and perhaps be beaten by the angry miners.

"Since you want a thrashing," he said, blusteringly, "I'll give it to you."

"And then off went his coat, a ring was made, and the two went at it hammer and tongs.

"Tom kept his word, and gave the braggart such a licking as I never want to get, taking all the conceit out of him and making him cry 'Enough!' in a short time.

"The fellow slunk away with an evil look on his face, and I saw his pal, Joe Holden, look savagely at Tom as if he were anxious to avenge his friend's defeat.

"The two stayed in camp for a month longer, and in that time Tom made a splendid haul, and was getting ready to start for the coast.

"One night I slept sounder than I ever did before, having been drinking with some of the boys, and when I woke up there was Tom lying beside me dead.

"I jumped up and examined the place where he kept his treasure, only to find it rifled and not a pebble left.

"I aroused the camp, and all the boys came in and made an examination, vowing vengeance on the murderer.

"Then, to my horror, I discovered that it was my knife that had killed poor Tom, and that I was regarded as the assassin.

"I swore that I was innocent, but no one believed me, and I was told to prepare for death.

"I alone had known where Tom's wealth was kept, and in searching my chest some of the largest and most valuable stones were found concealed.

"The evidence was dead against me, and I was condemned to die, but I asked for time.

"If I am guilty," I said, "poor Tom's body will bleed as I pass it. Let me be taken to see it before you bury him."

"They had been making ready for the funeral, and before lowering the body into the grave I was allowed to see it.

"I went up to it, put my hand on it, and once more declared my innocence, at the same time looking around at the men gathered near.

"Where is Jack Jasper?" I suddenly cried. "Why hasn't he come to the funeral?"

"Then all the boys looked around, and some one said: 'He isn't here. Let us look for him.'

"So they did look for him, but he was not to be found, nor was his chum, Joe Holden.

"If you want the murderer of poor Tom," I said, "go find out Jack Jasper and bring him here, and if the body does not bleed at sight of him I give myself up."

"There was a great excitement, and many went off to hunt up Jasper, but he was not to be found.

"I was declared guilty, but my judges agreed to give me till the next day to prove my innocence. If I had not done so in that time I was to hang.

"I passed an anxious night, but in the morning some of the men returned with Joe Holden wounded and half dead.

"The fellow confessed that Jasper had killed Tom, that he had seen him do it, and that it was intended to throw the suspicion of the horrible deed upon me.

"They thought that the men, in their first burst of rage, would kill me, and that then they could return, or at least be safe from pursuit.

"Jasper had fled, however, taking with him all Tom's wealth and accompanied by Holden, who had not assisted in though he had known of the crime.

"As Holden and I had never been friends, it could not be said that he was telling this story to shield me from punishment.

"He was believed, and I was released, and a party set out in pursuit of Jasper, who had abandoned his friend on the road.

"Jasper was not taken, and the men, incensed at Holden, made preparations on their return to hang him.

"He begged for his life, but they hung him up, throwing the rope over a beam in one of the largest houses.

"The rope broke, and Joe Holden fell to the ground nearly strangled, but still alive.

"His life was spared, as it was considered that he deserved to live after such a narrow escape, but he was warned to leave the place and never return, or he would be hanged.

"He went away, and after staying a month or two longer I did the same, and have been knocking around the world ever since.

"Once I came across Joe Holden, and he told me again that Jasper was the real murderer of Tom, and that his fortune had been made by the diamonds he had stolen from my poor mate.

"He had seen him once, he said, and he was living in affluence under another name, and had given his old pal money to leave the country and never return.

"To-night I have returned to my home for the first time in ten years, but to-night I have seen Jack Jasper, and I know that his secret sits heavy on his heart, that he knows it is known, and that some day vengeance will fall on him for the deed done so long ago.

"I say I have seen him to-night, and no further away than this house, this very room where I now stand.

"Gentlemen, Jack Jasper is among you, under an assumed name, carrying a secret that blights and burns as he listens to my words, a secret that shall one day drag him down to a dishonorable grave.

"Let him beware of Joe Holden, who yet lives; let him beware also of his other victim, Charlie Hope, whom he banished from home, but who, even at this moment, is following upon his track."

The story-teller suddenly paused and glided quickly from the room, while a painful silence fell upon all the company.

"It is false!" cried Hurd, suddenly leaping to his feet. "My name is not Jasper, I never saw the man in my life, I never was in Africa, the whole thing is a lie from beginning to end!"

Raymond Thatcher suddenly seized the excited man by the arm and whispered:

"Hush, you fool! The more you deny, the more will be believed."

Then Hurd quickly left the room, followed by the strange looks and doubting glances of all present.

Suspicion had fallen upon him, and do what he would, he could never shake off its blighting influence.

CHAPTER XV.

A DETECTIVE DETECTED—A GENEROUS OFFER.

Two or three days succeeded the night of Puffhausen's reception, and Jasper Hurd found himself received coldly by all who had formerly been his friends.

His wealthiest customers withdrew their accounts from the bank, and men who had notes coming due pressed the payment of the same.

It was suddenly learned that the stock of the western mines which Hurd had been rushing on the market was worthless, and the bottom fell out of the thing at once.

Hurd's bank lost heavily by this failure, and Wiggins & Higgins were found to be a firm of no standing, so that their paper which Hurd held was worthless.

Many ugly stories began to be rumored about the bank, and a number of persons who had intrusted their money and valuables with Hurd began to withdraw their property from his keeping.

Jasper Hurd was not yet beaten, however, and, calling Thatcher into his private office one day, a week or two after the affair at Puffhausen's, he said:

"Things are getting desperate. That fellow Puffhausen has got hold of Joe Holden in some way, and has wormed his story out of him."

"About the African trouble?"

"Yes. I never knew this wandering fiddler, Dick Fleming, and he is but a blind. Holden is the only man whom I fear, and he has threatened me more than once."

"You have sent him away on former occasions; can't you do it again?"

"If I could see him, but he is in the hands of Puffhausen."

"Who is the man, anyhow?"

"I don't know, but I'll bet he is a swindler."

"He is too rich for that."

"Not at all. Besides, we don't know how rich he is. All this display may be for mere show."

"There is a deposit in the bank. You forget that."

"Yes, and, confound it, he wants it out, and I've used it."

"Haven't you enough to cover it?"

"Not if there should be a run on the bank, which threatens."

"Well, how about the gold mine in Africa? Can't you sell out?"

"Nobody will take it now that I am in trouble."

"Isn't the stock good?"

"I don't know. Esperance has unloaded all he had."

"How about Puffhausen?"

"I don't know whether he has or not, but if I can nail him I'll do it."

"How are you going to do it?"

"Put a detective on him. I've sent for Hanks, and expect him any moment."

"If any one can find out anything about the Dutchman, he can do it."

"So I think."

At this moment Baker put his head in at the door, and said:

"Mr. Hanks, on business."

"Show him in."

The clerk disappeared and an ordinary-looking man entered and quietly took a seat.

Hanks, the detective, was a clever man, and had been most successful in ferreting out mysteries where all others had failed.

"You wish to see me?" he inquired, apologetically.

"Yes. I want you to shadow Puffhausen, and, if possible, detect him in something crooked."

"You suspect him?"

"Yes. Prove him to be a thief or an impostor, and your fortune is made."

"I will try," and without further parley or waiting for instructions the detective left the office.

He did try, and before long succeeded in getting himself employed by Puffhausen as his private secretary.

Everything seemed to favor him, and he congratulated himself on his success.

He had access to the rich man's papers, and made a complete examination of them, but without finding anything suspicious.

He reported from time to time to Hurd, and although he declared that he could find nothing against the man, said that once, when going out, he had met the mysterious fiddler coming in, and that at another time he had seen the same man loitering about the bank.

"Just include him in your job," said Hurd, "and if you can catch him in anything crooked let me know."

The next day, as the supposed private secretary was drawing up a document which Puffhausen had given him to work upon, his employer entered, locked the door, put the key in his pocket, and sat down.

"Now, Mr. Detective Hanks," he said, quietly, "suppose I should choose to kill you in this room and throw your body in a corner? Who would ever know it?"

Hanks paled for an instant only, and then replied:

"If I am missing instructions have been given to arrest you and search this place thoroughly."

"Mr. Jasper Hurd has these instructions, I presume?"

The detective said nothing, but the millionaire continued: "I know you and your mission completely. Jasper Hurd has employed you to shadow all my movements. He has also told you to find out all you can of one Dick Fleming. Do you wish me to tell you who the man is?"

The detective could only look surprised, and the other proceeded:

"Well, then, I am Dick Fleming myself. I am also Charlie Hope, known as the richest boy in the world, and Jasper Hurd's implacable enemy."

The detective was greatly surprised, but his companion went on quietly:

"You are a detective, and, I understand, a good one. A man who has lived among the savages of Africa and learned

all their trickery need not fear detection at your hands, clever as you are."

Hanks was more surprised than ever, but his astonishment increased when the man before him said, calmly:

"If Jasper Hurd wishes to fool with detectives, let him look to himself. If you want employment, enter my service, find out where one Joe Holden, seaman, is, and let him be brought face to face with Jack Jasper, the murderer of Tom Evans, in Africa, ten years ago. Do that and I will give you one hundred thousand dollars!"

CHAPTER XVI

THE RUN ON THE BANK.

Outside of the banking-house of Jasper Hurd an excited crowd had gathered.

It still lacked an hour of the time for business to begin, but as the minutes went by the crowd increased.

Ugly rumors had been floating about since early morning, and the depositors were anxious about their money.

As ten o'clock approached the crowd in front of the bank became so great that all traffic was blocked.

Just before the hour some one hung a placard out at one of the windows, and groans were heard.

The placard announced that the bank would in ten minutes open.

The bank opened at the time announced and a continual procession of people passed through its doors, going out, with money which they had drawn. At last the bank announced it had no more ready money at hand.

More than two-thirds of those inside had not been paid, and among them was a poor widow, who had placed all she had in the world in Hurd's keeping.

She was weeping bitterly, when a man of handsome appearance, who seemed older than his actual years, stepped up, and said:

"Madam, if you will give me your book I will see that you are paid."

"Who is it?" whispered several standing near.

"The rich man from Africa. He has lost a million by this failure, they say."

The widow handed her bank-book to the stranger, who looked at it, and then, taking out a well-filled wallet from his pocket, counted out a number of bills.

"There is the amount," he said, quietly, handing over the money and retaining the book.

"Heaven bless you!" cried the widow, falling on her knees.

"I will pay all claims on this bank not exceeding a hundred dollars each," said the stranger. "My name is Hope. I will be found at the office of Messrs. Esperance & Brother, further down the street."

Then he passed on a few steps, entered a carriage, and was driven away.

"Hurrah for Hope, whoever he is!" yelled the crowd.

"Heaven bless him for his kindness," sobbed the widow.

"Nobody will say that for Jasper Hurd, I reckon," cried a man close by.

Just then two men came down the steps, and as they reached the street the great doors of the bank were closed.

The two men were Jasper Hurd and Raymond Thatcher.

The banking-house of Jasper Hurd was never reopened for the settlement of the claims against it.

The sheriff came in and sold the fixtures, and these brought something, but it was not a drop in the bucket.

Hurd had been ruined, not only financially, but in reputation, and never more could he hold up his head among his former acquaintances.

All the smaller depositors had been paid, however, and then those who had larger claims, but it was not Jasper Hurd who paid them.

Some said it was Puffhausen, and some that the rich Frenchman, Esperance, had put his hand into his deep pocket and relieved the distress of the poor victims.

A young man calling himself Hope had paid the money personally, but every one said that he was simply a figure-head, and was employed by either Puffhausen or Esperance, opinion being about equally divided as to which of these two millionaires it was.

Hurd had disappeared no one knew where, some declaring that he had gone West, and others that he had taken a steamer to Europe as soon as the bank had failed.

Neither of these reports was true, however.

In a dingy rear office of an old tumble-down building, way downtown near the water, two days after the failure of the bank, sat Hurd and Thatcher.

The room contained a desk, two chairs, a broken table and a number of boxes stuffed to overflowing with paper and documents of every description.

On the table stood a black bottle and two tumblers, containing a small quantity of what seemed to be dirty water, but which was a poor quality of gin.

Both men had changed their outward appearance by shaving and both wore rough clothes, so that unless one were intimately acquainted with them it would have been impossible to penetrate their disguise, simple though it was.

"Well, Ray, they haven't caught us yet," said Hurd, with an uneasy laugh.

"No; and they're off the scent, too. They think you've gone to Europe."

"You learned that to-day?"

"Yes."

"What else?"

"Somebody is paying the claims against the bank—the smaller ones—all up to five hundred dollars."

"Who is it?"

"They say his name is Hope."

Jasper Hurd's face became livid, and he swallowed the contents of one of the tumblers at a gulp.

"Hope!" he cried. "There is none of that name left."

"You don't know that."

"I am sure of it!" hissed the other. "The vessel you shipped Charlie Hope aboard of has never been heard from, and not one of the crew could have escaped."

"They might have been wrecked, reached an uninhabited island, and have been rescued at last, Charlie Hope among the number."

"Such things happen only in romances."

"Then there is Harold."

"He wouldn't dare to come back, and besides, he is dead."

"You could not prevent him, Jasper, my boy, and you don't know that he is dead."

"If he were not he would write to his sister."

"Then you forget something else, my dear Jasper," laughed Thatcher.

"What is it?"

"You speak French?"

"No, and if I did, what has that got to do with the matter?"

"Everything. What do you suppose the name of Esperance, translated into our own language, means?"

"How should I know?"

"It means Hope, and Hope is the name of this——"

"It can't be possible," cried Hurd, angrily. "I have seen this Frenchman. He is older than Charlie Hope."

"Suffering may have altered——"

"And he possesses untold wealth. How could Charlie Hope in less than six years have acquired so vast——"

"You were going to investigate the Frenchman's affairs," interrupted Thatcher. "How have you succeeded?"

"It was Puffhausen, not the Frenchman."

"The same thing," laughed Thatcher.

"What do you mean?" asked Hurd, in a puzzled tone.

"That the two men are one, in my opinion."

"Nonsense."

"Not at all."

"Then you claim that Puffhausen is young Hope?" muttered Hurd, taking another draught from the black bottle.

"Or his brother."

"You're raving," snarled the other. "Do you know what his wealth is estimated at roughly?"

"Two or three hundred millions, I believe, but even were that thrice the true amount, he is rich enough for all practical purposes."

"And you think a mere boy can possess all that? Why, he'd be the richest boy in all the world."

"Which is just what he calls himself," said a strange voice.

Both men started to their feet as the door opened and a stranger entered the room.

"Who are you, and what do you want?" demanded the ex-banker, angrily.

The stranger laughed, put his hand to his face, removed a black mustache, and then said, in totally different tones from that he had first used:

"So my disguise was even better than your own? You know me now?"

"Hanks, the detective!" cried Hurd. "How did you find me out?"

"By being smarter than the men who are looking after you."

"Yes, they say I have gone to Europe."

"And I say go there as soon as possible, if you have the means."

"You're a detective," laughed Hurd, "and you advise me to fly to Europe. How do I know that you will not have already sent your agents across, so that I will be arrested on the other side?"

"Mr. Hurd," said the detective, quietly, "you employed me to do some work for you. That is finished, but I cannot turn against you until you have had a fair chance to escape, and that I give you."

"Why do you advise me to leave the country?"

"To escape from your enemies, who will hunt you down if you remain."

"You will help, I suppose?" sneered Hurd, who, being false himself, believed in no one.

"No, I will not," answered Hanks, showing no resentment, "for others, cleverer than myself, are at work."

"You know them?"

"Yes, and this much I tell you, since it is what I was paid to find out. You wished to know about Dick Fleming?"

"Yes."

"He is Puffhausen, and he is also known as Charlie Hope, the richest boy in the world."

Raymond Thatcher laughed, and, turning toward Hurd, whose brow was as black as night, said:

"And Esperance as well, as I told you."

"And Esperance as well," added the detective. "This man is on your track, and whatever unlimited wealth, the keenness of scent of a savage, the untiring energy of a savage, and the unbounded hate of a man outraged and injured can do, that will he accomplish."

"You are in his pay!" hissed Hurd, in a paroxysm of rage.

"I am not, but I will tell you what he offered me."

"Well?"

"He offered me one hundred thousand dollars if I would produce one Joe Holden and confront you with him."

"What does he know of that man?" hissed Hurd to himself.

"You forget his double character," answered Thatcher. "As Puffhausen he has been in South Africa. There he has met Joe and wrung this story from him, the story told by Dick Fleming, the wandering fiddler."

"A story which no one can prove," snarled the villain.

"You don't deny it, though?" laughed Thatcher.

"I defy any one to prove it, I said," cried Hurd again. "Joe Holden is dead."

"You are not sure of it," interposed Hanks, calmly.

Hurd turned upon the quiet, self-possessed detective with the greatest fury.

"You will hunt him up and earn the money that this lying Dutchman promised you?" he asked, trembling with passion.

"No, for I am still in your employ, and cannot break faith with you."

"Better take his advice and skip," whispered Thatcher.

"You will be safe."

"You have done all I wished," muttered Hurd, "and now do as you like."

"Very well, then, I will drop the case, and if you are wise you will do as I say and leave the country."

The detective turned to leave the room, but Hurd leaped in front of him.

"I know what you will do if I once let you out of here," he cried. "You will give the alarm and claim the reward. You shall never leave this place alive."

For an instant the detective turned pale, but then he said, as calmly as before:

"I promise you to keep absolutely silent."

"You cannot be trusted," growled the other, drawing a knife, "and I mean to settle this thing forever."

As he spoke he dashed forward, but at the same moment the door was opened violently, and a drunken, ragged sailor staggered into the room.

"Hello, Jack Jasper, it's you, is it?" cried the newcomer.

"I thought I'd find ye at last."

The man was Joe Holden, for whose production Charlie Hope had promised Detective Hanks one hundred thousand dollars.

CHAPTER XVII.

A DESPERATE RESOLVE.

At the sudden appearance of the drunken sailor Jasper Hurd paused, the knife seeming ready to fall from his nerveless grasp.

"I saw you once in the bank," the sailor continued, leaning against the door-frame, "and I saw ye again when the bank was busted, but then I missed ye until now, when I tumbled into your den by mistake. My own is 'upstairs, but I fell agin' yer door and so found ye, spite o' your disguisin'."

The detective now moved quickly to the door, Hurd seeming powerless to prevent him.

He then stood in the entrance regarding with great interest the occupants of the room.

"What I want of you, Jask Jasper, alias Mr. Jasper Hurd, is this," went on the sailor, in thick tones, the heat of the room evidently affecting him greatly.

"Well?" said Hurd, glaring fiercely at him.

"I want something generous to make me hold my tongue about that Joe Evans affair."

"Suppose I refuse to give you this?"

"Then," said the sailor, getting more incoherent in his speech, "I'll hunt up young Mis'r Hope, what I saw once a' th' Cape, an' tell 'm 'at yer 'n th' city."

"You told young Hope the story, then?" laughed Hurd.

"Yes'r, I tol 'm when I's drunk, an' I 'membered 't af'wards when he tol' me of it. He'll pay me well 'f I tell 'm agin'."

Hurd glanced quickly at Thatcher and then at the bottle on the table.

"Sit down, Joe," he said, quietly, "and let's have an understanding. Won't you have a drink?"

"Don't care 'f I do," hiccupped the drunken man.

Thatcher had poured out a tumblerful of gin, and he now stepped forward to hand it to the poor besotted wretch leaning against the door-frame.

Joe reached forward to take it, when the detective quickly threw out his hand and dashed the glass to the floor.

"You fool!" he cried. "Don't you know that that glass of gin would prove your death? Will you trust a man like Jasper Hurd, knowing what he has done?"

Hurd turned ghastly white and staggered into a chair.

"How dare you question my motives?" he whispered, rather than asked.

"I know you a little too well. You wish to stupefy this drunken wretch, and then put him forever out of the power to harm you."

"Wha's all th' fuss 'bout?" asked Joe. "Where's 'er drink o' gin? Gimme 't, I ain't had drink zis long time."

"Come away from here," commanded the detective. "Are you out of your senses? This man would murder you, once you lost consciousness."

"So he would," coughed Joe, who seemed to understand that, at all events. "So 'e would—so 'e would. Bad man, Jas'r is—bad man, so 'e would. Kill Tom, he did—Tom Evans; knowed Tom well; poor Tom, Jas'r killed him—kill me, too, so he would, lose m' grip, so he would."

"Come along," said the detective, taking a firm hold on the drunkard's arm and leading him from the room, Hurd glancing at him the while.

Joe chattering drunkenly and repeating the same things a dozen times, as men in his condition do, went with the detective, who with some difficulty succeeded in getting him downstairs to the street.

"The jig's up, Jasper," laughed Thatcher, when the two had disappeared.

"Not at all," replied Hurd. "That drunken brute won't be sober for a whole day yet, and in that time I can do much."

"You intend to leave the city?"

"Yes."

"And leave your wife and child up in the mountains?"

"Avice knows nothing yet, for they are far from any town or village."

"She will cling to you closer when she hears of your misfortunes."

"Just what I don't want," laughed the other. "Besides, young Hope will seek her out and she will stick to him then."

"And I suppose you'll give her up?" sneered Thatcher. "I wouldn't give him the satisfaction of taking her from you. I'd kill her and the brat first."

"Leave me alone as to what I'll do," answered Hurd, in the same sneering tone. "I will defy him yet."

He arose, upon this, put on a hat and passed out into the hall.

"Lock the door and follow me," he muttered.

Thatcher did as requested, and in a few moments the two men were in the street.

"Look over there," whispered Hurd.

The detective and his drunken charge were just seen entering a low lodging-house on the other side of the street.

Jasper Hurd, standing where he could see the doorway and be unobserved himself, watched the place eagerly.

"I've seen that house before," muttered Thatcher.

"What do you say?" asked the other nervously.

"That very house was once a tavern for sailors, and there, six years ago, Charlie Hope took the body of his old uncle, Donald Hope."

"Never mind that," snapped Hurd. "I want to make sure that Joe remains in that house to-night, and the detective, too, if possible."

"Why so?"

"So that they may never leave it!" hissed the villain. "Let us return to the building. We can watch the house from the front windows."

"Hadn't you better get away while you can?"

"No, for I'm going to stay and beat young Hope yet, as I have beaten all the family before now."

"And Joe?" inquired the other.

"Shall never tell his story to any living man."

"What will you do?"

"Burn the old rookery over his head and silence him forever."

CHAPTER XVIII.

NEARING THE END.

Charlie Hope, now on the flood tide of success, with the full prospect of seeing his life work speedily accomplished, was seated in the elegant but cozy library of his sumptuous apartments reading by the light of a shaded lamp, the glow of which fell upon his graceful form and left most of the room in a half darkness.

Near him sat a lovely woman, a piece of embroidery in her lap—though she was not working upon it—and behind her sat a man who resembled our hero, though some years older.

The lady was Ania, the beautiful Egyptian princess and Charlie's faithful wife; the gentleman was Harold Hope, his father.

"Charlie," said the lady suddenly, placing her hand upon her husband's shoulder.

The young man looked up from his book, and, turning his earnest eyes upon his wife, looked into hers for a few moments.

"You have something to say which you fear to tell me?" he said, quietly.

"Yes."

"Speak; I will listen."

Ania pressed both hands upon Charlie's shoulders, looked him full in the face, and said:

"Have you not gone far enough, have you no mercy?"

"Ania, love," replied the other, "you know my story, you know how this man persecuted me and mine, how he drove two sons from home, how he ruined a father and brought him to the grave, how he forced a pure girl to wed him, how with covetous hands he seized upon the property of another, and rose to a position of great wealth by fraud and deception."

"Yes, I know it, and I know, too, how you have requited all this."

"I have not requited it," answered Charlie, firmly. "He robbed me of my fortune."

"And you have stripped him of all his wealth."

"He drove me from home with a blasted reputation."

"And you have exposed his villainies and torn away the mask of virtue with which he covered his sins."

"He broke up our home, and—"

"And your sister is his wife," pleaded the lovely woman. "Would you cause her added sorrow? She may love him yet."

"Then, if she does," cried the young man, fiercely, "she is no longer true to us, to her father's memory, to our name."

"A woman should leave all for her husband," cried Ania, embracing him fondly.

Charlie gently disengaged the beautiful arms that encircled his neck, and said, slowly:

"I do not wish to injure Avice, for, misguided though she may be, she is my sister; but I do wish to drive this viper forever from the home he has made, and send him forth a wanderer upon the face of the earth."

"Have you not done so?"

"No, for he is even now in hiding in this city, Harold tells me."

"I said I only thought so," interposed the brother. "I do not know."

"But I do," answered Charlie, "and I have a work to perform."

"And that is—"

"You remember how I came to the city from Stanhope the night I was abducted and put on board ship?"

"Yes."

"And how strangely I met our Uncle Don, who had been attacked by ruffians who wished to rob him?"

"You have told me the story."

"You know that I took him to a tavern where he died, and which I left in the morning to seek rest and refreshment after a weary night."

"Then I met Thatcher, who gave me drugged liquor and took me, unconscious, aboard the Roderick Dhu and sent me over the ocean."

"I have seen the lawyer whom I called in that night, but he says that he could never find certain papers which Uncle Don had about him, and which are of importance."

"Those papers I placed up the chimney in the room of the old tavern before I went out, and while the lawyer was temporarily absent from the room."

"It is to secure those papers that I wish now to visit the old tavern. Among them is the will of our uncle. Jasper Hurd has come into wrongful possession of a fortune. I wish to show to the world how it was done."

"That will was never probated, and, therefore, this man was a thief. The world must know it, and condemn him."

"Of what avail will that be now?" asked Ania.

"To remove the stain from the memory of the dead," replied Charlie, gravely.

Then he arose, looked at his watch, and turned toward the door.

"You are going out?" asked Harold.

"I am going to that old tavern. I know the location."

"Let me accompany you. The place is a dangerous one; you may be attacked, perhaps killed."

Charlie Hope only smiled, and, going to his desk, opened a small drawer and took out a pair of small, richly-chased revolvers.

"These are all the friends I need," he said, putting the weapons in a side pocket.

"May I not go with you?"

"I prefer that you should remain with Ania," was the quiet answer.

Then the young Croesus left the room, procured a soft felt hat and a light-weight overcoat, and noiselessly departed from the house.

He found a cab a few streets away, and was driven to within a moderate distance of his destination, when he paid and dismissed the driver, continuing his way on foot.

Our hero turned down a narrow alley and suddenly paused when a short distance down.

His quick ears, trained in the African jungles to detect the slightest sound, had heard the footfall of a man, though the policeman, not far away, had heard nothing.

His keen eyes had seen a shadowy form steal out of a building and glide along in the shadow, though all was dark and gloomy.

"I know that form," he thought, "but what is he doing here? Can he have been on the same errand as myself? No, no, that is unlikely."

The man he had seen now hurried across the street and entered a tall building opposite.

He had evidently not seen the young man, and it was apparent, too, from his movements, that he did not wish to be seen.

Standing in the deepest shadow for a few minutes, Charlie approached the only building in the alley which showed any light, the hour being now quite late.

This place, the single exception, was a low drinking saloon and lodging-house, the doors of which remained open all night, its business being done more in the hours of darkness than in the daytime.

As Charlie reached the door and was about to enter, a

sudden sound, which only the sharpest ear could detect, was heard above him.

Quickly glancing up at the windows above, he saw a faint glow of light, becoming rapidly lighter, the cause of which he divined in an instant.

"The place is on-fire!" he muttered, "and this is more of the diabolical work of Jasper Hurd! What can be his motive? Some one is in that house whom he wishes to destroy, but heaven helping me, I will save him yet, whoever he may be!"

CHAPTER XIX.

OUT OF THE FIRE.

"The house is on fire! Save yourselves at once, and give the alarm to those above!"

These words astonished the half-dozen idlers and drunken loafers sitting or standing in the barroom of the lodging-house in the alley.

They were spoken by a well-dressed young man, who had suddenly appeared in the room, and the tone in which they were uttered left no room for doubt that they were true.

"House on fire!" gasped the landlord. "Then heaven help them drunken lodgers upstairs. The place is a regular tinder-box, and will be all in a blaze in two minutes."

Then he secured his cash-box, jumped out from behind the bar and hurried into a street, followed by those who were not too dazed to heed his words.

"Two minutes!" murmured Hope. "The time is short, but it will suffice me."

In an instant he was in the hall and in another was dashing up the rickety stairs to the room above.

"Fire, fire! Save yourselves!" he cried, in shrill tones.

A confused murmur was heard around him, and he could hear people moving on the floor above.

Pausing for an instant on the first landing, he cried loudly, so that those above might hear:

"Fire! Save yourselves!"

Then, hurrying along the passage, he suddenly stopped before a door and listened.

"It is in here and this is the very room."

Trying the door, he found it locked, but at once put his shoulder to it and forced it open.

At the same time a key fell from the door in the hall outside.

"The door was locked on the outside," he muttered.

As the panels fell in Charlie saw that the room was all in a blaze.

Dashing in, he sprang toward the chimney-place, at the same time darting a rapid glance toward the bed.

One man, half dressed, was just getting up, but another lay in a heavy sleep on the side next to the wall.

"Get out of here!" cried Charlie. "The flames are spreading."

"Hope, is this you?"

In an instant our hero had recognized the speaker.

"Hanks, the detective?"

"Yes."

"What are you doing here, and who is your companion?"

"Joe Holden, seaman."

"Holden! Then save him, as you value life!"

Hanks made one bound to the washstand, seized the pitcher and dashed its contents over the floor.

The fire had been started in this room, and was already making alarming headway.

It was the crackling of the flames which Charlie had heard in the street, the window being open.

The glimmer on the window panes had next attracted his attention, and fortunate it was that his senses had been so well trained.

The flames had already eaten through the dry, rotten planks of the flooring, and were rapidly extending beneath it in all directions.

Hanks had stayed their progress for but an instant, and they were now spreading fast.

"Save that man and your fortune is made," cried Charlie.

Then he sprang to the chimney and tore away the rough fire-board which concealed the opening.

A cloud of dust fell down, and it was evident that a fire had not been built there for years.

Thrusting his hand upward, our hero felt all around, and presently touched something which gave forth a rustling sound.

His fingers closed upon it and he quickly drew it forth.

It was a package of papers wrapped in a piece of oiled silk which cracked and split as he touched it.

Hastily thrusting it into an inside pocket, Hope now sprang into the room and glanced hurriedly around.

People were heard rushing downstairs, and there was a great deal of noise in the street besides.

The room was full of smoke, and a dull glow was seen on the partition and on the ceiling above.

In a second it had brightened, and flames burst out in several places.

Hanks was attempting to drag the drunken sailor from the bed, but his strength seemed insufficient.

"Save yourself!" cried Charlie, pushing the man aside.

Then, small and slender as he seemed, he raised the inanimate form of Holden in his arms, allowing the greater part of the weight to rest on his shoulder.

"You have the strength of a lion!" gasped Hanks.

"And the heart of one."

Then he hurried across the room just as a shower of blazing rubbish fell from the ceiling upon the bed.

In a moment it was in flames, the smoke being thick and stifling.

The floor creaked and trembled under his feet as he ran, and scarcely had he left the room before a score of fiery tongues sprang up in the path he had just trodden.

Reaching the passage, he saw that the flames had already preceded him.

The woodwork, dry and rotten, burned like tow, and a wall of fire was between him and the stairs.

Hanks had paused, terrified at the sight before him.

"The window!" he cried, choking with the smoke. "It is our only chance!"

"No, no, the floor will give way before we can reach it."

Hope sprang past the detective, holding his head down and closing his mouth and eyes.

He knew which way to go, as well with his eyes closed as open, and he dashed forward straight for the stairs.

Once he turned his head, and, though he said nothing, Hanks knew that he was encouraging him to make the effort upon which depended his life.

Rushing through the veil of smoke and flame which intervened, he reached the stairs, and again turned to see if his companion had followed.

Though safe himself, Hope would not descend until he saw that his companion had followed.

Hanks staggered forward and then fell, half unconscious, at our hero's feet.

Although burdened with the weight of the rum-steeped sailor, Charlie reached down, seized the detective by the collar and dragged him to his feet.

Even then there was no time to lose, for the walls were beginning to totter, and a moment's delay might be fatal.

Exerting a strength which seemed little short of miraculous, Charlie clutched Hanks around the waist, and, with a burden more than double his own weight, rushed down the creaking stairs.

As he reached the street they fell behind him, and a mass of flame and smoke followed, as though eager yet to take that noble life.

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He was greeted with cheers, and now the fire-engines began to play on the doomed building.

Hanks was quickly seized and carried to a place of safety, but Charlie retained his hold on the sailor, and hastened off beyond the reach of the fire.

"I have baffled you, Jasper Hurd," he muttered, "and all the world shall know of this, your latest crime, and its motive. The end is rapidly approaching, and then my task is done."

CHAPTER XX.

MORE REVELATIONS.

The will of Donald Hope was found to provide for the distribution of his property in quite a different way from that which Jasper Hurd had said it had.

The old man had told Charlie that his brother would inherit all, but he had not mentioned a further provision, owing to his becoming unconscious.

Charlie's abduction had prevented his examining the papers further, and now, for the first time, he made a full explanation.

He found that the entire possessions of his uncle were left to his brother Egbert during his life only, and could not be disposed of by him by will or otherwise.

Upon his death the estate was to be divided equally among the two sons and the daughter, a separate provision being made, however, for her, in case she married with her father's consent and before his death.

A copy of the will by which Jasper Hurd came into possession of his wealth showed that Egbert Hope had willed everything that he had or might have, to him, and with this was the will of Donald Hope, leaving everything he possessed without restriction to his brother Egbert, and leaving his nephews and niece nothing.

It was apparent, therefore, that a fraud had been committed, for, if the will of Donald Hope, by which Hurd inherited, were genuine, it was annulled by the one in Charlie's possession, that being of a later date.

In order to prove whether the first will were a forgery or not, it was necessary to see the original, a copy being on file in the surrogate's office, through some trickery on the part of Hurd.

To obtain the alleged original will and compare it with that known to have been written by Donald Hope was now the next thing to be accomplished.

Hurd was missing, his house and furniture being in the hands of his creditors and advertised for sale.

This was to take place the day after the fire, when Charlie had so nobly saved the life of Joe Holden, the chief witness against Hurd.

Without saying anything about the discovery of the will, Charlie attended the sale of Hurd's effects and bought in the entire lot—house, furniture, horses, carriages, paintings and all, taking the entire estate and crowding out all other bidders.

Having taken possession, our hero began his search for the will, resolving to hunt until he found it.

He had previously bought up all the fittings of the bank and of Hurd's private office, through an agent, so that his name might not appear, and had searched carefully through every safe, desk and table for the document.

His toil had been unsuccessful, but he now did the same thing with the furniture of the house.

Every cabinet, secretary, desk, table and chest of drawers was examined and even taken apart to look for secret drawers, and at last the will was found in a hidden compartment of a small brass and ebony cabinet, the last thing to be examined.

The document was compared with the will recovered from the fire, and was found to be a forgery, although a good one.

The fraud was made known at once, and then all the world knew that Jasper Hurd had not first sinned when he cheated men of their hard-earned money through his bank.

Correspondence from Cape Town showed that one Jack Jasper had been transported for forgery from England, and had been sent to Hobart Town; that he had been seen later at the Cape, but had then disappeared, no one knew where.

All this came out, and the name of Jasper Hurd was a reproach and a by-word among all men.

Joe Holden, whom Charlie had saved, lingered almost at the point of death for many weeks, and it was a wonder that he had not died at the time of the fire, having inhaled so much smoke, and being at the time stupefied by liquor.

He grew better, however, and then made a statement before a magistrate, the story being the same in substance as that told by Charlie in the guise of the wandering fiddler.

Charlie had learned it while in Africa, and he had known at once, from the description of the man, that Jack Jasper and Jasper Hurd were the same.

He had lost sight of Joe, and did not know that he was in the city until he rescued him from the burning house in the alley.

There could be no doubt of the truth of the story, for many and how an innocent man had nearly lost his life through old miners at the diamond fields remembered the incident being suspected of the murder.

The fact also that Holden was in a dying condition gave additional strength to his narrative, and no one could doubt its truth.

"This is the man who sought to ruin a whole family," cried Charlie; "whom men trusted, flattered, honored and ran after. Upon what basis is society founded that such a man can so long flaunt himself before the world and not dread exposure?"

"Then you have finished your work and vengeance is satisfied?" asked his wife one evening a few weeks later.

"Yes, but this villain's wife and child must be saved from the consequence of his crime."

"You would not have them suffer with him, then?"

"No, for Avice is my sister, and though perhaps misguided, is not the evil thing that this man has been."

"And you will go to them?"

"If I can find them, yes; but all trace of them has been lost."

"Perhaps," said Harold, bitterly, "she still clings to him and shares his exile."

"Then," said Charlie, sadly, "let her go her way, for I will not punish her—will not visit greater sorrow upon her than her life with such a wretch must be."

About this time Holden died, his vicious mode of life having shortened his years by a score at least.

It was now late fall, and our hero, feeling need of rest, went away from the city, no one knew whither.

CHAPTER XXI.

IN THE MOUNTAINS.

The mountains lay bathed in the haze of a November sky, and their woods were glorious with the tints of autumn.

Here and there among the hills were seen the white cottages and tall church spires of a quaint village, and through the valley wound the river like a silver thread.

Back from the village street, in one of the hillside hamlets, was a pretty rustic cottage, standing on an eminence and overlooking the town, the valley and the river.

In this cottage lived Charles Hope, his wife Ania and his brother Harold, with two or three servants and a mountain guide.

They had gone away from the city a month previous in order to rest, and now no one knew where they were, and they lived in the most perfect quiet.

Those who met them supposed they were ordinary people from the city, come to enjoy a vacation in the mountains, and that was all they did know.

No one knew Charlie Hope as the wealthy shipowner, banker and merchant, and the gamblers in the city who had predicted his speedy ruin laughed when he disappeared, and said that they had always said he would fail.

However, Charlie Hope cared nothing for what people said, and always acted upon his own advice.

He was in search of rest and quiet, and he had found it up here in the mountains, and that was enough.

They were sitting upon a shelf of rock overlooking the valley, just in front of the cottage, Charlie smoking and Harold reading a book.

Ania was not far away, looking at the wild landscape and at the descending sun, when the guide passed carelessly by and made a quick signal to Charlie.

Then he passed on and descended a slope, being soon hidden by a clump of trees below.

After a few minutes Charlie arose carelessly and strolled away as if having no particular object in view.

Gradually he left the group behind him and made his way by a roundabout course to where the guide was waiting.

"You have something to tell me?" he asked.

"There will be a storm on the mountains to-night."

"I know that," was the quiet answer.

"But you don't know what awful things our mountain storms are. You'd better take the lady down lower."

"She is not afraid," answered Hope, calmly. "She has witnessed storms as terrible as any you have up here."

"That is all I wanted to say," said the guide, after a long pause. "There's a big storm coming, but if the lady don't mind it, why, it's all right."

"I am obliged to you for the caution," returned the other, courteously. "However, we are as safe here as anywhere."

"Unless a cloud should burst," said the guide.

"I am not afraid, and I admire grand sights."

Then Charlie returned to the platform where the house stood, leaving the guide to attend to the horses, and wondering what sort of man this could be that was not afraid of mountain storms.

The sun went down in a mass of copper-colored clouds, and from the distant mountains strange mutterings began to make themselves heard.

As the evening wore on these became louder, and before long a terrible crash was heard, accompanied by a brilliant flash of lightning.

Then the rain began to fall in torrents, but the thunder and lightning were incessant and seemed to increase in violence.

Charlie, Harold and the guide were standing at one of the windows of the house looking at the storm, when Charlie suddenly cried:

"Look at that dense mass of clouds which has suddenly gathered on yonder mountain-top and which the lightning has just revealed."

"Aye," muttered the guide; "if it bursts we shall indeed have a storm worth speaking of."

Nothing was said for a few moments, when suddenly a more blinding flash than ever revealed the mountain peak with the black cloud hanging just over it, thicker than before.

The guide uttered a sudden exclamation:

"It will break, and then heaven help the people in the valley!"

"Could the people in the valley be warned?"

"If one had a fleet and sure horse, and did not fear the ride."

No more was said, but at the next flash Harold turned suddenly and saw that Charlie was no longer at his side.

"It is sheer madness," he cried.

"What is?" asked the guide, quickly.

"For my brother to spread the alarm. He will lose his own life and accomplish nothing."

The guide turned quickly and saw that Charlie had disappeared.

"If that be his errand," the man said, "may heaven prosper him in it."

"Amen," answered a voice, and both men turned.

Ania was standing just behind them, and had heard their last words.

"But he will be lost. We must not allow him to thus peril himself," murmured Harold.

"Look!" cried the wife.

A flash of lightning illumined the scene for miles around.

On the mountain-top the mass of cloud was so dense and black that naught else could be seen.

Just in front of the house, firmly seated on a powerful coal-black horse, was Charlie Hope, waving them adieu with one hand, while with the other he grasped the reins.

It was a picture never to be forgotten.

"The cloud has burst!" cried the guide.

"He has gone!" shrieked Harold.

"Heaven speed him on his errand," murmured the wife.

Then a fearful burst of thunder shook the house, and for a moment all was dark.

When the lightning again flashed Charlie Hope was speed-

ing down the mountainside on his errand of mercy to those dwelling in the valley below.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE WARNING.

"Hallo, there, hallo!"

The sound of a horse's hoofs and of a strong man's voice were heard in the little village street.

The night was dark and stormy, and the sounds were, therefore, all the more startling.

Men hurried from their cozy firesides and threw open the doors and windows.

"Hallo, there, hallo!"

"Aye, aye! What has happened?" cried the men.

"A cloud has burst on the mountain-top, the flood is rushing toward the valley. Fly to the hills and save yourselves."

Then on dashed that brave steed and its braver rider, while the alarm spread like wildfire.

The steel-clad hoofs clattered on the road, and again that clear voice rang out in words of warning:

"The flood is upon you! Fly for safety to the hills!"

Those who heard the words knew their dreadful meaning. A heavy rain would flood the streams and would send rivers through their streets, but the bursting of a cloud—

That meant destruction, utter and complete, and loss of life to all who remained behind.

So the words were not spoken unheeded, and the villagers hastily left their homes and fled to the hills.

On and on dashed the rider, shouting out his words of warning, and but few neglected the caution.

The old and feeble were assisted by those younger and more robust, and on all sides men and women were seen hurrying to the hills on either side.

And now an angry roar is heard behind him, and the rider turns his head for an instant.

The rain is falling in torrents, but for a moment the lightning illumines the scene.

Down the hill from behind was rushing a mass of water, seething, boiling and foaming.

Before long it will be upon him.

Ride as he will he cannot escape the flood.

From the nearer hills come the voices of those he has warned.

"Save yourself before it is too late! To the hills, man, to the hills!"

But on and on he rides, screaming out his warning, and men and women hear him and fly for their lives.

The village is passed, but there are houses beyond, as he can see by the lights, and more lives must be saved ere he can look to his own safety.

But on comes the flood, and already the streets are like rivers.

Houses have been swept away, and the flood bears upon its bosom the wrecks of happy homes, uprooted trees, masses of rock and earth and all manner of rubbish.

Once let him be caught by that fearful tide and he is lost forever.

For a moment the angry stream is stayed in its mad course.

A house is dashed against a huge tree at the side of the road, is swung around and held fast.

Others are swept against it, and for a moment the tide is checked.

Right and left sweeps the current, while in front the road is yet clear.

Then the swelling waters, bearing rocks, trees and houses upon their current, come rushing down upon the obstruction and sweep it from their path.

It yields, and the awful flood sweeps on, carrying ruin in its path.

On dashes the rider, and now he reaches a little house, the last of all in the village.

"Save yourselves from the flood!" he shouts.

A woman rushes out with a young child, a boy of five years, in her arms.

The flood is almost upon them, and she appeals passionately to the stranger.

"In the name of heaven, save us!" she cries, "for we are helpless."

The man checks his horse's speed, bends over in the saddle, reaches down and lifts the frantic woman and child to a place beside him.

Then he turns for a moment and sees the flood gaining on him.

Driving the spurs deep into the animal's sides, he guides him toward the hills.

On come the horrid waters with a rush and a roar, and the first of the flood strikes him.

Up the bank dash horse and rider, and then the waters rush on.

The night passes and the dawn comes and beholds a scene of ruin.

The village has been swept away, and the once happy homes of the townspeople are in ruins.

A few houses have escaped, and in those the more fortunate are doing all they can for the relief of those who have lost everything.

One and another of the villagers ask after the brave man who spread the alarm and saved the lives of so many.

He rode a black horse, men say, and was tall and handsome and brave-looking.

The horse is found far down the village dead, and many say that the man, too, has perished.

"No, no," says a pale, trembling woman with a pretty boy at her side, "he is alive—he cannot have perished."

"Have you seen him, then, ma'am?" asked one.

"No, sir; but I know he lives. Such bravery could not meet with death."

"Well, whoever he is, and wherever he may be," said the man, "he is a hero, and need not be ashamed to show himself and boast of last night's deed."

CHAPTER XXIII.

CONCLUSION.

The inhabitants of the little village which had been so nearly swept away by the waterspout were greatly excited.

Some one had offered to rebuild their houses, restock their farms and restore things to their former condition as far as was possible.

No conditions were imposed, all the work to be done without recompense or reward.

The villagers were asked to state their losses, point out the site of their former dwellings and describe them, and that was all.

Carpenters, masons and bricklayers came to the place in squads, horses and cattle were sent in car loads, farming implements and household furniture were sent in and the work began in earnest.

But who was setting it all on foot was what every one wished to know.

A lawyer from New York had erected a rude dwelling, and here all the business was transacted; but to all questions the man replied that he was simply acting for another.

Who that other was he refused to state, saying that the gentleman did not wish to be known at present.

The woman saved with her son by the mysterious rider, and known to the villagers as Mrs. Jackson, still remained in the town.

She had not owned her cottage, but had rented it for the summer, and now that her husband was missing she had no home, and, it was said, no friends to whom she could apply for help.

The New York lawyer heard of her, and ordered that a house should be built for her, and that she be supplied with all the necessaries of life.

The poor woman consented to receive this aid only for a time until she could provide for herself and the child, and meanwhile the work of rebuilding the town progressed rapidly.

One day, a month after it had begun, many houses being now finished and occupied, the villagers assisting in the work gratuitously, a strange gentleman was seen to enter the building office.

When he came out, an hour later, Mrs. Jackson and her boy were passing the door.

"Oh, mamma," cried the child, breaking from her, "there

is the good, kind gentleman that saved us on the night of the storm."

Then he ran to the stranger, seized his hand, held it firmly, and said:

"You must not go away till my mamma has thanked you for what you did."

"It was nothing, child," said the man, quickly, as he attempted to go on.

"Yes, yes, it was, and all the folks have been looking for you ever since. I know you are a good gentleman, and if you have no little boys of your own, won't you take me? My papa has not come back since that dreadful night."

"Hush, Charlie, hush!" cried his mother, approaching.

The stranger turned, looked at the woman, and turned pale.

"Avice Hope, is this your son?"

The woman flushed, caught at a fence for support, and answered:

"It is."

"Where is his father?"

"Dead."

The man paused, and then said slowly:

"You know me?"

"Yes, now," was the almost inaudible answer. "You are my brother, Charlie Hope. You have hunted my husband to his death."

"I have not!" cried Charlie, sternly. "Heaven's vengeance alone has visited him. Do you forget all that he did to me and mine?"

"But, oh, Charlie, I loved him."

"Then your love was thrown away. If you loved him, you forget all the wrongs we have suffered at his hands."

"Will you live with me, my little fellow, and be my boy?" asked the man, whose hand the child still held.

"Yes, for you are a kind gentleman, and I love you."

"What is your name?"

"Charlie Hope—that is all. I have dropped the rest," answered the child, pausing after the first two words.

"That is my name, too," was the quiet answer.

"Then you are my Uncle Charlie come back from sea?" cried the little fellow. "I am so glad. My mamma said you were good and kind, and that some day you would come home."

A crowd had by this time collected, and Charlie had been recognized by many as the man who had given the warning on that wild night a month previous.

Hurriedly catching the child in his arms, he entered the office, followed by the mother.

"Harold," he said, to a man seated at a distance, "I have brought Avice."

When Avice Hope, Jasper Hurd's wife, left the village, it was in a closed carriage, and with her were her two brothers.

With them she went to the house on the mountain ledge, where she met and was welcomed by Charlie's wife.

Little by little she told the story of her life, and though it was seen that Hurd had shamefully treated her, no one could doubt her love for him.

Such things happen every day, and are so common that no one need wonder at them.

Her husband had come to the mountains at last, hoping to hide from his enemies, and had been lost on the night of the storm.

Vengeance was satisfied, and as an offset the villain's wife and child had been saved by the very man who had pursued him so relentlessly.

Of Raymond Thatcher nothing more was ever heard, and Hurd's body was never recovered.

His wife, consistent in her inconsistency, loved him till she died, a year later, and little Charlie went to live with his uncle.

The village on the mountain, rebuilt by Charlie, has been renamed Stanhope and is a flourishing town, and every year the Hopes spend the summer months there.

Charlie Hope and his lovely wife still live, and young Charlie, who resembles the Hopes, and not his wicked father, is the heir to all his uncle's millions, and will some day be like him, the richest boy in the world.

Next week's issue will contain "THE HAUNTED LAKE." A strange story. By Allyn Draper.

CURRENT NEWS

A comparatively rare operation has been performed on Miss Elenora Appel, eighteen years old, of Granite City, at St. Luke's Hospital, St. Louis. Portions of two of her ribs were removed and these were grafted on her skull to close an opening in the skull which had resulted from an operation following an attack of brain fever several years ago.

After Mayor A. J. Geller of Flushing, Ohio, sentenced three hoboes to work cleaning out ditches and repairing the streets he took pity on them and decided to help with the work. They worked so well that the Mayor could not keep up with them, and when they had served their fines he gave each a dollar bill and a recommendation to a contractor in a nearby town where men were needed.

While Joseph Chubbin, 5, was playing with a goat in the Stanton colliery timber yard, Shenandoah, Pa., the surface caved into the old workings, carrying boy and goat into the mines and burying them alive. Rescuers set to work immediately and attempted to lower each other with ropes into the cavity to recover the boy's body, but on account of the surface still "working," had to abandon it, fearful of being buried alive also.

Declaring that he was starving, George M. Mohr, a stranger, went to Lodi, Cal., and surrendered to the authorities, stating that he had stolen a rig in Stockton with the intention of selling it, but had concluded that the best plan was to give up both the idea and himself. Stockton officials were notified and went for the prisoner. The rig belonged to a resident of this city. It is thought Mohr took the rig for the purpose of getting in jail, where he could get enough to eat.

The gift chapel at Fort Sam Houston is to be made into a soldiers' club with reading room, writing room and a picture show, says the San Antonio Light, and citizens of San Antonio have been asked by the two chaplains at the post to contribute towards furnishing these rooms with a few rugs, easy chairs and writing tables. Church services will be held in the main room on Sundays. Chaplain Barton W. Perry, 3d Field Art., and Chaplain R. R. Fleming, jr., 19th Inf., have made arrangements to give free moving pictures every night, to establish a free reading room and writing room, and to place a free telephone to the city at the chapel.

Because 150 canvasmen quit Barnum & Bailey's circus in Newark the other night to work in munition plants at \$5 a day, the "greatest show on earth" had a hard time when it reached Trenton the following morning. It was well toward noon before the last of its cars arrived, and the parade, scheduled for 10 a. m., was abandoned. The afternoon performance was given up and the crowds that gathered at the big tent went home disappointed. Twenty thousand school children and many adults

lined the streets awaiting the parade, which had been announced. The crippled forces of the circus were able to arrange everything in time for the evening performance.

Further successes for the Belgian expedition which has invaded German East Africa were announced in the official statement issued the other day by the Belgian War Department at Havre. The statement says that Colonel Molitor, in command of the southern column, occupied Kigali, capital of the German Province of Ruanda, on May 8. The Belgian troops have also captured the island of Kiviivi in Lake Kivu, which the Germans took by surprise at the beginning of the war. Kigali is in Northeastern German East Africa, about fifty miles from Lake Kivu, which forms the boundary here between the Belgian Congo and the German colony.

That the cavalry of the United States Army is the best in the world was asserted by Capt. T. A. Roberts, U. S. A., inspector-instructor for New England, in the course of a speech reported in the Boston Transcript. He said that United States troopers can shoot and fight as well on foot as on horseback. They have been drilled faithfully in both branches. Other countries deplore the fact that their fighting horsemen have not been trained to fight dismounted. The Kaiser was quoted as blaming himself for neglecting this feature in German cavalry training. Captain Roberts pointed out that the cavalry is an auxiliary for the infantry and artillery. He expressed the opinion that had the German cavalry been in good shape in Russia last year, the Russians would not have been able to make the many changes which they did in good order.

The plan for saving daylight by putting clocks ahead one hour was adopted by the House of Commons by a vote of 170 to 2, a London dispatch of May 8 reports. Clocks will be put forward one hour on the night of May 30-31 and will be changed back again on September 30. Sir Henry Norman, who presented the resolution in Parliament, estimated that the economy in lighting alone will be \$12,500,000 a year. This plan, now adopted in Germany, France, England and Holland, appears to be meeting with general approval abroad. Denmark, Norway and Sweden are stated to be on the point of adopting it, and it is considered probable that it will also be adopted by Austria, Turkey, Switzerland, Italy and Spain. The idea is said to have been originated by an Englishman, William Willett, and a daylight saving bill was first introduced in the House of Commons in 1908, but failed to pass. Mr. Willett's proposals were to move all the clocks forward an hour at 2 a. m. on the third Sunday in April and backward an hour on the third Sunday in September, giving a gain of 154 hours of useful daylight yearly. This would come about through carrying one of the hours of wasted morning sunlight to the end of the day.

BOWERY BEN

—OR—

THE BOY WITHOUT A NAME

BY J. P. RICHARDS

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER XXIII—(Continued)

"So am I," said Mr. Meadows, heartily, "glad for them and glad for you. Mrs. Merchant has always had my sympathy, and I am greatly pleased to know that her sorrow has turned to joy. I wish that my own might end so happily, but I'm afraid that it never will."

"Yours, Mr. Meadows?" asked Ben in surprise. "Why, I did not know that you had any sorrow. Are you afraid that Mrs. Meadows will not recover?"

"Oh, no, it is not that, Ben," replied the merchant. "My wife is doing nicely in Bermuda, and will return in the spring greatly benefited in health and mind. No, it was not that I was thinking of."

Ben made no answer, fearing to arouse sad thoughts, but in a moment the merchant added:

"We never speak of it, and neither Arthur nor any of the children knows of it. Arthur was a boy of three at the time. Vinnie was the merest infant, and the others were not born. I lost my second child, a boy a year and a half old, in something the same way that Mrs. Merchant lost her baby, and have never been able to trace him."

"Do you think he is still alive?" asked Ben.

"I don't know what to think. Sometimes I hope, and then I despair, and it is this that preys upon me and has kept my wife an invalid. Arthur knows nothing of it, for I do not wish to sadden his life as mine has been saddened."

"Then I won't say a word about it," said Ben earnestly, "but maybe you will find him again, the same as Lizzie was found."

"Perhaps, my boy, but I dare not hope for such an event, so it is best that nothing more be said."

CHAPTER XXIV.

BEN FINDS HIS NAME.

The package which Ben had obtained from the hag proved to contain the very things necessary to establish Lizzie's identity as Mrs. Merchant's child, and the fond mother was indeed grateful to Ben for having recovered them.

The boy had called for Arthur on his way to Mrs. Merchant's, and the two friends had gone together, as Ben did not want to go alone on such an occasion.

"I suspect that I've got the very things the kid's mother wants, Art," he said, "and there'll be a lot of crying and all that, and I'll be just broken up if I go alone, so I want you to come along. You're older than I am, and not so easily rattled, so you'll be a help to me."

"All right," said Arthur, "I'll go with you. I'm afraid I'll be the one to get upset and not yourself. Why, you're always as cool as can be."

"Ah, that's in a fight or danger of some sort," answered Ben, "but this is different. I never could see any of them crying plays at the theater without blubbering, but a fight or anything like that always made me stamp and clap my hands."

There were not as many tears as Ben expected, but when they had examined all the proofs and Mrs. Merchant was satisfied beyond a doubt that Lizzie was really her own flesh and blood, she took the boy in her motherly arms, kissed him tenderly and said:

"My boy, you have filled my heart to overflowing, and I only wish that I could do you an equal kindness and give you the name which you have lost."

Then Ben's eyes filled with tears, and Arthur took his hand and said:

"Cry away as much as you like, old chap. It does you credit. No matter if you have no name, I'll be a brother to you as long as you live. I'll get father to adopt you, and you shall have my name. How does that suit?"

"Ah, go on, you'll get me to crying more if you don't stop," said Ben, half laughing. "Of course, I'd like it, and if I don't find out anything I'll go you."

Mrs. Merchant sought out Granny Green and, with the hope of reforming her, gave her money, stocked a little store for her and started her in the business of selling candy, stationery and notions.

That her efforts were misplaced, however, were soon shown, for it was not long before the old woman's store became the resort of receivers of stolen goods, policy bankers, drunkards and thieves, and in a short time Granny Green was in jail, and after her return she went back to her old life, and soon died in it.

Stapleton, it was learned, was a nephew of Mr. Merchant, and in case of the child's death would have inherited a fortune, and this was the motive that actuated him in wishing to get rid of Lizzie.

He did not return to New York for three or four years, and then only in a quiet way, under another name, an old habit of his, and as a pettifogging criminal lawyer, making the round of the police courts.

At last he was detected in a swindling operation, and barely escaped from the city in time to evade arrest, since which time he has been lost sight of, and may be dead for all that Ben knows.

The winter passed, and, with the approach of spring, Mrs. Meadows expected to return to the city, greatly improved in health.

It had so happened that Ben had never seen her, but now that the boy was so good a friend of Arthur's, the latter was most anxious that his mother should see the boy.

"She'll think just as much of you as the rest of us," Arthur said, "and we'll leave it to her whether you shall take our name or not. I'm willing, and so is father, but you seem to be the only one that is holding out."

"It's just this way, Art," answered Ben, with feeling. "You don't know who I am, and I don't. My father might have been a bad one, and you don't want to take a boy like that into your family. Wait and see if we can't find out something."

"Well, then your father was a bad one or not, you're not sure," said Arthur, "and if mother likes you, that settles it."

(To be continued.)

ITEMS OF INTEREST

GET OIL FROM BONES.

Bones, hoofs, and horns of slaughtered cattle must not be destroyed, but stored for delivery to the local German authorities, in accordance with a general order which went into effect throughout the empire on April 25 and is published in detail in the German press. The Imperial Chancellor is empowered to fix the prices to be paid for these articles, and the local officials are to arrange a system of gathering the accumulations. This arrangement is expected to increase the output of oils and fats.

GERMANS BEG FOR FOOD.

German soldiers along the Swiss-Alsatian frontier, chiefly elderly men of the Landstrum, have begun to ask food from the Swiss soldiers. The Germans say they have not eaten meat for weeks. The *Neue Stuttgarter Zeitung* says the food situation in Rhine towns is becoming intolerable. The newspaper advised the government to take drastic measures to change the mode of living of the people. It suggests that cooking in private families be prohibited and that the population be ordered to eat in common at restaurants, where meat would be served once daily, at noon, and other vegetables in the evening.

SHIP, SUNK 200 YEARS, BLOCKS RIVER TUBE.

Ships of old New York, claimed long ago by the mud of the harbor bottom, are being found, one by one, by tunnel makers of modern days.

Several weeks ago subway diggers uncovered an ancient bark, buried in the sand, thirty feet below the junction of Greenwich and Dey streets. In the hulk was a skeleton.

The other day diggers near the Brooklyn end of the Old Slip-Clark street tunnel, far under the East River, discovered another old ship. Apparently she foundered more than 200 years ago and has gradually sunk through twenty-four feet of mud.

Her load of iron ore still remains intact, and disappointed the diggers, who thought they had perhaps found a treasure ship, filled with gold. Until the ore is removed the tunnel shield cannot be pushed forward at the usual rate of nine feet each day.

WINS TITLE BY A POINT.

Charles McCourt, of Pittsburgh, winner of the inter-State three-cushion billiard league championship, also took away the national title at three-rail play from the holder, Charles Ellis of Chicago, on May 17th, by a score of 150 to 149 for the three nights' play. The game was exciting from start to finish. Ellis made a miscue with both men at 149, and McCourt had an easy time making the final count.

McCourt got a lead of 21 on Monday which was cut down to 8 last night, and Ellis continued to play a great uphill game to-night, and had a splendid chance to win when McCourt seemed to lose

his nerve after he had scored his 149th shot and then missed the next six, while Ellis came on with six points and tied the score.

Then came the miscue and the balls were left in a fine position for McCourt to run out a winner. McCourt had a high run of 7 and Ellis 4. It took 76 innings to-night to wind up the match.

MAINE SHIPYARDS BUSY.

Maine shipyards are busier now than they have been for years. The scarcity of tonnage caused by the war has created a big demand for the excellent schooners turned out at these yards, and from Portland to Eastport the shipwrights are at work. A feature of the activity is that many of the vessels in course of construction or contracted for are to be controlled by foreign owners.

It is said that for the first time American shipyards are building merchant vessels for foreign account. One notable order was that recently received by R. L. Beam, of Camden, Me., to build six large schooners, which in the aggregate will cost about \$1,000,000.

Yards at Bath, Me., which have been idle for years, are being made ready to take care of sizable orders. Work has already begun at the Bath Iron Works on several \$1,000,000 tank steamers for the Standard Oil Company, and this big job has given the town the first boom it has had in many years. In its halcyon days the old town on the Kennebec turned out hundreds of wooden vessels in a year.

HEAR FROM RASMUSSEN.

Tidings from Knud Rasmussen, the famous Danish explorer, now en route for the Arctic regions on board his ship *Kap York*, have just been received in letters forwarded by his wife from Copenhagen, Denmark. In these letters Rasmussen outlines his plans for his present Arctic expedition, and tells of his trip to unexplored regions of Northern Greenland. He is due to arrive soon at Thule, North Star Bay, where Dr. Edmund O. Hovey, of the American Museum of Natural History, and leader of the Crocker-Land Relief Expedition, is marooned with his companions in the ice. The letters containing these advices reached New York after a considerable delay, due to the detention of ships from abroad and the overhauling of the mail-bags by warring nations. Rasmussen left Copenhagen on April 1 and was due to arrive in Holstenborg, South Greenland, on or about April 20. From Holstenborg he proposed to sail northward on his staunch ship for Thule, his camp and base of supplies on the coast of Greenland. Thule is near the point where Dr. Hovey was stationed at last accounts.

If Rasmussen finds that ice conditions are unfavorable in the Arctic waters, he will leave the *Kap York* and start off on dog sledges and by forced marches proceed through the Danish Colonies and on to Upernivik, and by this mode of travel he will reach Thule early enough to make his way over the inland ice by the last of June.

TIMELY TOPICS

Robert Newlin, of St. Clairsville, Ohio, has had the whiskers he has worn for thirty-three years shaved off. Friends figure that, including interest, he is more than \$1,000 better off than if he had been getting shaved twice a week.

Pensions will cost the American people \$6,000,000 less this year than last under the annual Pension Bill, as reported to-day by the Appropriations Committee. The total is \$158,065,000, \$2,500,000 less than the estimates submitted. Pensions paid under a recent special act creating an army and navy medal roll of honor will come out of the general fund.

Hailstones as large as ordinary hen's eggs fell at North Webster during a severe storm recently and considerable damage was done. The roofs of several store buildings were punctured by the hail and the windows in many residences were broken. An automobile standing in the street was badly damaged. The top was torn in many places by the large hail and dents were made in the radiator.

That certain birds of prey are sometimes luminous at night is a fact well known to observant naturalists. It is explained by the presence on their feathers of the phosphorescent spores of certain fungi that grow upon the trees in which they roost. But the Bulletin of the National Acclimatization Society of France records the observation of a white swan that was luminous all night from July to October of last year, while none of the other birds that inhabited the same lake could be seen after dark.

Chief Btsn. William L. Hill, U. S. N., presented to the Navy Department a thousand dollar bond, the interest from which is to be used for purchasing prizes to be given for proficiency in seamanship at the training stations. The present intention is to purchase a gold boatswain's whistle, which will be given to the one who makes the best record. The Department promptly turned this bond into the Treasury Department, to be held for the purpose for which it was presented.

Robert Henderson has begun work on what will be the biggest corn crib in the county, at Logan Grove, three miles south of Junction City, Kan. He will build the crib on a stone foundation 3 feet high, which will be 64 feet long, 16 feet wide and 14 feet from sill to eaves. The crib is set high off the ground, so as to make shelter for hogs in bad weather. It will have a special dump elevator for elevating corn from a wagon into the high crib, and its capacity will be much larger than that of any other crib in the county.

The government of the Dominion of Canada has issued an order forbidding the use of the name "American Legion" to be used by Americans who

have enlisted for service with Canadian troops in Europe. This action was taken, it is reported, in response to a request by the United States Government to the British authorities. The instructions also forbid the officers and men of the 97th Battalion and other Toronto units composed of Americans to display the title on uniform or other parts of equipment. The 212th and 213th Battalions at Winnipeg and Vancouver come under the order.

After living on charity in a squalid room, for which the landlord, in pity, exacted no rent, and fed and clothed by charitable organizations, Arthur P. Churchill, aged seventy-three, died in Hamot Hospital, Erie, Pa., insufficient and improper nourishment being a contributory cause of his death. One week before charity agents had found him seriously ill and sent him to the hospital. Realizing that the end was near, he sent for a notary public and to him gave his secret that approximately \$10,000 in cash and gilt-edged securities were hidden in wall recesses of his humble room. In his will he ordered all debts paid and the remainder divided equally between his sole heirs, two nephews, Arthur B. Churchill and Perry J. Churchill, of Ambridge, Pa.

A report has come from Chicago to the effect that Jess Willard has signed articles to box Fred Fulton before the club offering the best inducements, the bout to be staged on Labor Day. The articles of agreement are reported to have been signed by Tom Jones, representing Willard, and Mike Collins, of Hudson, Wis., Fulton's manager. Bids were thrown open and will not close until July 1. According to the articles Willard is to get a flat guarantee of \$37,500 with a percentage privilege, and Fulton will take one-third of the gate receipts, provided they are large enough to pay Willard's guarantee and leave more than \$5,000 additional for the promoter. Incidentally this affair introduces a new fight promoter, D. W. Griffith, the movie magnate. He is the man who made the offer that brought the two big fellows together.

The personification of the United States under the designation of "Uncle Sam" originated in this way: Soon after the declaration of war with England, in 1812, Elbert Anderson, a contractor of New York, visited Troy, where he purchased a large quantity of provisions for the army. They were sent to Ebenezer Anderson and Samuel Wilson. The latter gentleman, universally known as "Uncle Sam," superintended in person a large number of workmen employed in overhauling the provisions bought by the contractor. The casks were marked "E. A.—U. S." The marking of the casks, on one occasion, was intrusted to a facetious fellow, who, on being asked the meaning of the mark, said he did not know, unless it meant Elbert Anderson and Uncle Sam, alluding to Uncle Sam Wilson. The joke was adopted among the workmen, and the United States became personified as "Uncle Sam."

MAKING IT PAY

OR

The Boy Who Bought a Newspaper

BY WILLIAM WADE

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER I.

DICK WANTS TO BUY A PAPER.

"I believe I could make it pay if I had some money to put in it."

"Nonsense, Dick. The paper is dead, and there's no use trying to galvanize a corpse. You'll lose all the money you put in it."

"Unfortunately I have none to put in, but I believe that it could be made to pay, and that I could do it."

"Oh, you could buy it cheap enough, I don't doubt, but I tell you there's no money in it. The Times is making all the money there is, and they've got money to spend, while your folks have not, and then they're too old-fashioned."

"I should change all that if I owned the News," said Dick.

"If you take my advice you'll go in with the Times or else get out of the slow old town altogether."

"I don't intend to do either, Jack, but if I had the money I'd soon show these folks what a live newspaper is."

"The Times' people think they've got one, old man."

"Well, they haven't, for all that, not what I consider an up-to-date newspaper, at any rate."

Dick Helper was a young printer employed on a weekly newspaper, and Jack Hemstead, his particular chum, was a clerk in the principal bank.

The town had ten or twelve thousand inhabitants, enough to make it a city, in fact, yet it had only two papers, both weeklies, the people depending for their general news on a daily published in a city about twenty miles distant.

The News, upon which Dick was employed as foreman, was an old paper, but it had run down and was regarded by many as dead.

The Times, the newer paper, was run by two men with political aspirations, who had come to Norwood about two years previous and had managed to build up a fair circulation, although their methods were not such as Dick and many others approved.

Dick was satisfied that if the News adopted more modern methods in putting the news of the day before its readers, it could be made to pay, for there were many who had always taken it, and they would not change if it were made more up to the times.

Dick had long held this idea and, in a conversation with Jack one Saturday afternoon when work was done, he gave expressions to his views.

Jack did not agree with him, but Dick did not change front, and, if anything, became all the more settled in his convictions that the paper could be made to pay.

The last thing Jack said was:

"Why, see here, Dick, you may not know it, but our bank holds old Root's notes, and if we wanted

to discontinue carrying 'em and demanded payment, there would be no News. Colonel Hamilton has the say of what the bank does, and the Times people are talking of running him for Congress in this district. Suppose he goes over to the Times? The News would go under, wouldn't it? You'd better get the band wagon and be at the head of the procession, and leave the old News to die a natural death."

"Colonel Hamilton is a Republican and the Times is Democratic," thought Dick, as Jack walked away. "It is not likely that he will change, but they might. Anything for money. The colonel can throw the bulk of the county advertising into their hands, to say nothing of other patronage. Well, I still think the News could be made to pay."

Having nothing to do, Dick walked toward the railway station, the mail train from the city being due in a short time.

The railroad ran alongside a small river which flowed through one part of Norwood, and the back of the station was quite close to the bank of the stream.

Crossing the river, a short distance from the station, was a bridge, the end of which was within a few yards of the railroad tracks.

As Dick stood on the station platform, where he could see up and down the railroad track as well as the highway in both directions, he saw a young girl drive upon the bridge from the further shore.

In a moment the bar was down, preventing any one crossing the track, but the girl kept right on over the bridge.

Then an approaching train, around a bend, gave a shrill whistle. Dick, turning toward the bridge, saw that the girl was in great peril.

She was seated in a light buggy, drawn by a raw-boned horse, who seemed to have become suddenly unmanageable.

Dick recognized the young lady in an instant as the daughter of Colonel Hamilton, one of the richest men in Norwood, the president of the First National Bank, and a person of considerable importance.

She was in danger and, no matter who she was, the boy felt impelled to go to her assistance.

The horse had become frightened by the sound of the whistle and backed the carriage in such a manner that the wheel was under the vehicle. It was in danger of being overturned.

The bar being down, there was little danger that the animal would get across the track upon leaving the bridge.

The engineer blew his whistle again, louder than before.

At once the frightened animal became perfectly unmanageable.

He now backed the buggy still further, and sent the rear wheels against the low guard rail of the bridge.

This was of wood and was not only quite low but of very flimsy build.

If it were to give way, there was nothing to prevent the horse and buggy from going backward into the river.

Dick saw the young lady's peril and acted at once.

He jumped from the platform, dove under the bar and was on the bridge in an incredibly short time.

(To be continued.)

ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

THE SPEED OF DOGS.

Eskimo and Siberian dogs can travel forty-five miles on the ice in five hours, and there is a case on record in which a team of Eskimo dogs traveled six and a half miles in twenty-eight minutes. According to Mr. Dusolier, the speed of the shepherd dogs, and those used on hunting ranges, is from ten to fifteen yards a second. English setters and pointers hunt at the rate of eighteen to nineteen miles an hour, and they can maintain this speed for at least two hours, says *Our Dumb Animals*. Foxhounds are extraordinarily swift, as is proved by the fact that a dog of this breed once beat a thoroughbred horse, covering four miles in six and a half minutes, which was at the rate of nearly eighteen yards a second. Greyhounds are the swiftest of all four-footed creatures, and their speed may be regarded as equal to that of carrier pigeons. English greyhounds, which are used for coursing, are able to cover, at full gallop, a space between eighteen and twenty-three yards every second.

VALUABLE FISH SCALES.

Among unconsidered trifles may be included the scales of fish. Of value and utility to the owner during its sojourn in the vast deep, the scales are ignored after capture. But it was ever thus, says *Pearson's Weekly*. In days gone by fish scales possessed a real value, notably those of roach, bleak, dace and whitebait. Older writers tell us how the scales of these fishes were collected and used in the manufacture of necklaces, earrings and such-like ornaments. The Thames fishermen used to catch the fish, take off the scales and throw the body back into the river.

A pigment was obtained by treating the scales in a certain fashion, whitebait being the most popular fish used for the purpose. So great, formerly, was the demand at times that the price of a quart of fish scales varied from 1 to 5 guineas. This treatment of fish scales for making small personal adornments is attributed to the French. A Parisian artist one winter, it is said, used thirty hamperfuls of bleak scales in the course of manufacture. To-day, however, the industry is practically dead.

"HONESTY" HIS MOTTO.

"The spirit of honesty, promptness, efficiency and order is now expressed in me, and is manifest in all that I think and do."

This was Walter Vanderburgh's motto. When Detective Cowen arrested him on a petit larceny charge he repeated it. In his pocket was found a large number of valuable color prints, torn from some of the most valuable books in the public library at Los Angeles.

Young Vanderburgh, who is fifteen years old, says he is the son of a wealthy New York importer. When the youth was locked up in the city jail he told how he aspired to become a great painter, and resorted to theft so as not to be deprived of his self-education in art.

RECRUITS BARRED BY CIGARETTES.

Excessive cigarette smoking caused fifty per cent. of the rejections at the United States Marine Corps recruiting station in New York since May 1, according to Captain Frank E. Evans, recruiting officer. The specific causes were faulty respiration and tachycardia, or rapid heart beat. The Marine Corps standard is very high, Captain Evans explained. Of the last 149 applicants examined nearly half were found to have symptoms easily recognized as being the result of excessive or incessant cigarette smoking.

DEEPEST GOLD MINE.

The world's deepest gold mine is the Morro Velho, in Brazil, where the Portuguese were first induced to settle by the discovery of the yellow metal. The first gold was discovered in 1699, near the present city of Ouro Preto. The gold was coated with a black substance and hence was called "ouro preto"—black gold. The city which they founded was long called Villa Rica de Ouro Preto—the Rich City of Black Gold—a name which was somewhat cumbersome even for the Portuguese, so they finally shortened it to just Ouro Preto, the name by which it is known to-day. Once it was the most important city in Brazil, the valuable metal being obtained from the gravel of almost every stream in the region. Not only the stream gravels yielded gold, but many gold-bearing quartz veins were worked.

The great gold vein of the Morro Velho mine is described by Benjamin LeRoy Miller and Joseph T. Eingewald, Jr., in the *Bulletin of the Pan-American Union*. They compare the vein to a gigantic knife blade held vertically and thrust into the earth at this angle, with the point still lower than the present deepest workings. And it is these workings that make the mine remarkable. The combined depths of the connected shafts give a total of 5,824 feet. In other words, here is a gold mine that is being worked at a depth of more than a mile below the surface of the earth.

The rock temperatures increase as the earth's crust is penetrated, in some regions the increase being as much as one degree for each fifty to sixty feet increase in depth. At this rate the temperature at the bottom of this mine would be over 100 degrees higher than at the surface, and fried ham and eggs might be prepared for the miners without any other heating apparatus than the loose rocks lying about. Incidentally miners would be going through the frying process, too. Fortunately, however, in this mine the rate of increase of temperature is only one degree for every 100 to 120 feet, giving the rocks a temperature of only 112 degrees. By forcing cooled air down into the mine by means of fans the temperature is lowered to a little less than 100 degrees. Even at that it is rather snug and the miners usually wear only shoes, donning trousers when company is expected. The mine has produced a total of about \$55,000,000 worth of gold.

NEWS OF THE DAY

Pedometers worn by the senior girls in the domestic department of the Kansas State Agricultural College is the latest plan of the department to determine how many unnecessary steps the girls take in the kitchen while preparing meals, it has been announced. The girls who serve in the dining-room also will wear pedometers.

A ring which she had found, and with which her children had played occasionally for two or three years, was taken to the Municipal Loan Office, Kansas City, by a poor woman who thought she might borrow a dollar on it. "Yes, we'll let you have a dollar, or more," the manager said. "I'll let you have \$200 on it, if you wish." The diamond in the ring was said to be worth \$300. The woman said she supposed the diamond was an imitation.

To clean a cheap alarm clock take off the bell and the two feet, and unscrew the keys used for winding. Then take the movement out of the case, dip a feather in benzine and with this rub out all the dust and fluff from the little holes where the axle works. Wipe off all dirt and benzine, carefully oil with a drop of pure sperm oil on the feather all the arbors, but avoid letting oil come in contact with the balance spring, or the clock will run irregularly.

George R. Stark, employed by the Kent Lumber Company at its plant in Barneston, Wash., broke his wooden leg while on duty at the mill and has asked the industrial insurance commission for financial relief. The report to the commission states: "He was working on the conveyor. A slab caught in the conveyor and threw him down, jumped on him and broke the ankle of his wooden leg." Stark says that the injury is a permanent one and that "it never will get well."

Mrs. D. Johnson, of Cottonwood Falls, Kan., had an encounter with an agent selling flavoring extracts. Mr. Agent, after exploiting the merit of his extracts in glowing terms to his would-be customer without making a sale, completely lost his temper and got rid of two bottles of his choicest vanilla by hurling them at her. Being a good dodger, however, Mrs. Johnson escaped injury from the flying missiles, which struck a door by her side, sending a shower of broken glass and liquid over her kitchen floor.

A process of taking a photograph on the leaf of a plant is described in an article by Dr. Hans Molisch in *Die Umschau*, a translation of which appears in the *Scientific American*. Briefly, the process is as follows: Fasten a negative with strong contrasts to a very smooth, thin, hairless growing leaf—such as the Indian cress, scarlet runner or nasturtium, and leave it exposed to strong sunlight for several hours. Then cut the leaf from the plant, steep it in boiling water for half a minute, then immerse it in

warm 80 per cent. alcohol. After a little time the leaf, now white, is immersed in a dilute tincture of iodine. The result is a positive photograph, often of surprising sharpness.

At one time, many years ago, the wedding ring was worn on the first finger. People who have seen the old pictures of the Madonna in Rome will remember that in one or two of them there is a glistening ring on the forefinger of her right hand, but with Christianity came the wearing of the wedding ring on the third finger rather than the first. The old story of there being a vein that runs from that finger to the heart is nonsense. Its use originated in this way: The priest first put it on the thumb, saying: "In the name of the Father"; next on the second finger, repeating: "In the name of the Holy Ghost," and on the third finger, ending with "Amen," and there it was allowed to remain.

Can a snapping-turtle bite? Two eminent lawyers argued before Judge King in the Civil District Court, New Orleans, that, being toothless, it can't. Two equally eminent lawyers, citing the case of the mosquito, said a bite was a bite whether the biter had teeth or not. Judge King is to settle judicially this momentous question and on his decision will depend Anthony D. Miceli's chances of winning his suit for \$5,000 personal damages. He was walking through the commission district of Poydras street ten days ago when a turtle that had crawled to the sidewalk from a coop at the establishment of Cululich & Son snipped a piece of flesh from his ankle. He brought suit against the turtle's owners, and on the trial he exhibited his ankle and the wound. But the firm entered as its main defense that a turtle can't bite. Judge King remarked that Solomon had a cinch as compared with his task.

One of the wonders of the ancient world, and probably the greatest of them, was the pyramids of Egypt. And yet some of the giant sequoias of California that are now thrifty trees had bark on them a foot thick when Cheops began building the great pyramid that bears his name. Beneath the shadow of the pyramids Napoleon said to his troops: "Forty centuries look down upon you." In the shadow of the big trees of California one might say: "Eighty centuries look down upon you." There are trees in the grove estimated by scientists, among them John Muir, the eminent naturalist, to be 3,000 and even 10,000 years old. The oldest living things in the world are these giant trees. Also the species of vegetation to which they belong is the oldest in the world. The sequoia tree, exactly like that of California, flourished several millions of years ago. We know that because we find their fossil remains buried beneath thousands of feet of rock, and geologists are able, by reading the leaves of those rocks as an ordinary man would read a book, to tell when

PLUCK AND LUCK

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Good Current News Articles

"Tony" Denier, eighty-six years old and noted as the original "Humpty Dumpty clown," is an inmate of the almshouse, to which institution he was committed recently. For more than half a century he was kept busy in the circus ring and on the stage. When he retired he had saved more than \$17,000.

A "war settlement warrant" for \$968, signed by Secretary of the Treasury McAdoo, has just been received by the heirs of Samuel H. Pipes in payment for fifteen Missouri mules which the Government requisitioned from him in the Civil War. Efforts to collect for the mules had been made by Pipes for forty years. He died six years ago.

Baseball fans now may follow the fortunes of their favorite team on the road and on their home grounds. A huge electric scoreboard has been installed on a theater stage, and now one may sit in a cool theatre and follow the game as well as if he were sitting in the grand-stand at the game. Every detail of each play is minutely recorded, and so clearly are the plays shown that a child can follow every play.

An attachment for a motor car designed to scrape from the tire any tack, nail or screw that may be picked up on the road has just been patented by Bertram Cohen, of New York. It consists of a scraper semicircular in shape, placed over the top of the wheel, separated from it by about one-eighth of an inch and attached by an adjustable support to the anti-housing or the steering knuckle arm. The scraper is hinged to the top of its support so that when it becomes necessary to apply chains to the rear tires it may be swung over out of the way. Mr. Cohen claims for his invention that anything picked up by the tire will instantly be removed by it before the wheel has made a second revolution and driven the object further into the tire.

The passing of the Kilauea National Park bill now before Congress, and strongly recommended by the Lands Committee, will, for all time, set aside

for the free use of the public, one of the most unique and wonderful districts in the whole world. The park will inclose an area of some thirty miles by ten miles and will comprise the summit and crater of the volcano of Mauna Loa, the active volcano of Kilauea, fourteen other large craters, many others of smaller size, and innumerable caves and natural wonders. Among the latter may be mentioned the little known crater of Makaopuhi; the famous tree molds, the great fern and koa forests; the sulphur banks and many other places. From its highest point, nearly 14,000 feet above the sea, to its lower levels at an elevation of about 3,500 feet, the whole park reserve will enjoy a climate which will make it the envy of every health resort.

Grins and Chuckles

"That's what I call a Judas kiss." "What's that?" "One from my wife, to see if I have been drinking."

Browne—Why did you refuse to shake hands with Smith? Towne—He's a great secret society man, and I was afraid I'd get the grip.

Customer—I paid fifteen cents for that last cigar you sold me, didn't I? Clerk—Yes, sir. Customer—Let me have one for about one thousand dollars.

"Men's promises," the young wife said, between sobs, "are like pie crust——" "That's tough," said the young husband, and then she got angry enough to cry.

Minnie—What frauds these beggars are! I met a "blind" man, who said: "Please give me a penny, beautiful lady." Mamie—Yes, he said that to make you think he really was blind.

"That new manager seems to be a big gun," said the stenographer. "Yes, and he is quick-firing, too," said the cashier. "I have already received notice that my services are not wanted."

First Robber (who formerly lived in a boarding house)—Sh! These people must be rich. Second Robber—Why? First Robber—I went into the pantry and found a strawberry shortcake with strawberries in it!

Dr. Arnold was paying a visit to one of his patients—a young mother. "You must let the baby have one cow's milk to drink every day, Mrs. Burrell," he said. "Very well, doctor; if you say so, of course I will," replied the perplexed young woman, "but I really don't see how he is going to hold it all."

A clergyman, famous for his begging abilities, was once catechising a Sunday-school. When comparing himself as pastor of the church to a shepherd, and his congregation to the sheep, he put the following question to the children: "What does the shepherd do for the sheep?" To the confusion of the minister, a small boy in the front row piped out: "Shears them!"

INTERESTING ARTICLES

GOLD IN THE STREET.

From ground washed up by a burst water main in the business district of Helena, Mont, the other day two gold nuggets worth \$25 apiece were picked up. The find caused much excitement among old prospectors, who mined the principal streets in Helena when it was one of the richest placer gulches in history.

LETTER IN FIRE ALARM BOX.

Jeromius Hiatt, eighty years old, mailed his first letter the other day while driving into the city. Now he knows the difference between a mail box and a fire-alarm box. He tried to mail the letter in an alarm box and called out the entire City Fire Department. He was arrested, but released by Police Judge Jackson when he said he never mailed a letter before.

HIGH-FLYING BIRDS.

There are two animals that puzzle naturalists more than any others. They are nature's submarine and aeroplane, the whale and the eagle. It is known that whales occasionally descend as much as 3,000 feet below the surface of the sea—a depth at which, by the pressure of the water, they ought to be crushed flat. Why they are not injured, scientists have yet to discover. It is this pressure which prevents a modern submarine descending even 300 feet, let alone 3,000.

Eagles have been seen through telescopes to fly with apparent ease from 30,000 to 40,000 feet above sea level, says Pearson's. At that height no human being can live, owing to the rarefaction of the air. How the birds live and fly at far greater heights than men can endure for long is a question still to be answered.

PENSIONS FOR GEESE.

Age, a cook executioner, a platter on the dinner table and a hungry family have no terrors for a goose and a gander penned up in Mrs. Ray Boey's back yard at No. 3420 West Forty-ninth Street, Cleveland, Ohio.

Having reached the ripe old age of thirty-six years, "Dick" and "Mary"—for these geese have names—are going to be pensioned. They will spend their declining years in luxury on a pond and a plot of grass in Brookside Zoo.

These geese were raised by Mrs. John Benns, Mrs. Boey's mother. It was her wish that they be allowed to die a natural death.

Mrs. Boey, unable properly to care for her elderly charges, appealed to Councilman Dickerson to provide a home where they might enjoy comforts which the confines of a back yard denied them. Councilman Dickerson secured their admittance to pension privileges at the Zoo.

SPEED AND POWER OF DOGS.

Few people realize of what remarkable speed dogs are capable. Some figures in regard to this have

been gathered by M. Dusolier, a French scientist. After pointing out the marvelous endurance shown by little fox terriers who follow their masters patiently for hours, while the latter are riding on bicycles or in carriages, he says that even greater endurance is shown by certain wild animals that are akin to dogs. Thus, the wolf can run between fifty and sixty miles in one night; and an Arctic fox can do quite as well, if not better.

SHE CALLED THE WRONG DOCTOR.

A corn doctor and a piano tuner have been "making" Blue Rapids, Kan., recently, and both have been meeting with much success. A story is being told about a woman who wanted a painful corn removed. She telephoned to the drug store where the doctor was making his headquarters and asked him to call at her home. A few minutes later she saw a man with a small grip in his hand, coming toward her home. Opening the door she greeted him with "Was glad when I heard you were in town, as I have been putting off for a long time having the work done; just sit down." In a few minutes the woman returned to the room in her bare feet. Exhibiting a large corn she said: "Do you think you can take that off without hurting me?" The supposed corn doctor looked chagrined and said: "Great Scott, lady, I am the piano tuner."

NEW FRENCH AEROPLANE.

The French papers were recently allowed to state that France now possessed an aeroplane which had beaten the world's record for speed. By courtesy of the French War Office, I was allowed to visit Louis Bleriot's factories at Suresnes, near Paris, and inspect the wonderful new aeroplane which is making rings around the Fokker. M. Bleriot gave me such details as can be published of the new marvel.

The Fokker has been described as a hawk. The newest French machine is a swallow, a graceful, almost frail looking biplane. It is called a spad, the word being derived from the initial letters of the Societe pour l'Aviation et Derives. It climbs rapidly and smoothly and can attain a speed of more than 125 miles an hour. The Fokker's speed is 100 miles an hour. On account of its swiftness the spad can be intrusted to only the most expert pilots, because although the speed can be reduced a little, only the most skillful airmen can alight without smashing the machine. The deadly work of the spads may be traced through the daily French communiques.

I asked M. Bleriot his opinion of the Fokker.

"It is a very greatly overrated machine," he said, "and no better than the aeroplane we have had in France for a long time. I refer to Morane-Saulnier. The German machines are without doubt inferior to ours or yours, but they have an engine, the Mercedes, which is as good as but not better than the French engines. Never for a moment has Germany had the mastership of the air and now that we have this machine we have established a lead which will never be rested from us."

THE NEWS IN SHORT ARTICLES

GREAT VOLCANOS ACTIVE.

Two of the greatest volcano craters in the world are active, according to a cablegram received by the Government Weather Bureau, at Chicago, from the Weather Bureau at Honolulu. It reads: "Mauna Loa in eruption and Kilauea unusually active."

Clouds of steam and smoke rose 20,000 feet and were visible for hundreds of miles.

Lava is reported flowing from Mauna Loa, but that is unconfirmed. No fire visible on that volcano, which has not been in eruption before seven years. Its crater is more than 13,000 feet high.

WHISTLING WELL CALLS DOGS.

Lake George's whistling well, a freak of nature that is unexplained by professors at the University of Minnesota, again is in the limelight. A farmer in the vicinity has written county officials asking if something can be done to stop the peculiar noise. Frost is leaving the ground and the whistling is loud and distinct. "I bought two dogs this winter to guard the house and to help in herding the cattle," writes the farmer. "Every time the well whistles they run over to it and stick their heads down in the hole. I can't keep them around the house; they don't help me with the cows."

PRECIOUS MICE REACH NEW YORK.

Fear of a Zeppelin raid on London has been the means of bringing a valuable scientific acquisition to the Crocker Cancer Research Laboratory at Columbia College. During the past week four mice arrived at the Crocker Laboratory. They are offspring of mice which have been inoculated with tumor germs for fifteen years. In the last Zeppelin raid over London a bomb was dropped dangerously near the laboratory where the experiments were being conducted, and for fear another bomb might destroy the work of years, the laboratory officials decided to ship the mice to America.

BOYS GET RICH CATCHING SPARROWS.

A dozen or more boys of Bartlesville, Okla., are doing much to rid the community of English sparrows in order that song birds may multiply and flourish, and at the same time earning pocket change. For each sparrow captured and destroyed they receive a reward of a penny. The method adopted by the sparrow hunters rests chiefly upon a pocket flashlight, for their work is at night. During the day they find the nesting places of the pest birds. When darkness falls they go from house to house, climb to the roosts of the birds, turn the glare of the flashlight upon them, and the rest is easy.

SMUGGLED HIGH SHOES.

The women of Windsor, Ont., and vicinity, who "forgot" to pay duty on fashionable foot-wear purchased in Detroit, have been stopped by sharp-eyed customs officials at the Windsor ferry docks and

compelled to contribute 37 1-2 cents on every dollar of the cost of the shoes. The Canadian customs authorities recently issued a warning that many women of the border cities were wearing shoes on which no duty had been paid. Orders were given to stop all wearers of high-topped shoes which cannot be bought in Windsor. As some of the shoes cost from \$6 to \$8 a pair, the duty paid by violators of the customs laws amounted to several hundred dollars.

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DO SHIPS SINK TO THE SEA-BOTTOM?

The question of whether or not a modern steel ship which capsizes in midocean will sink to the bottom has been discussed at considerable length in the past few years. Many argue that since the water of the ocean at great depths is under enormous pressure there must be a point somewhere between the surface and the bottom where it is so highly compressed as to support steel so that the wrecked vessel will remain suspended there.

At the bottom of the ocean, which, at the point of greatest depth is a little over six miles, the density of the water, owing to the pressure, is only about one-twentieth greater than at the surface, says the Pathfinder. Only two substances have been found less compressible than water; there are glycerine and mercury. Steel is compressed over 50 per cent. more than water at the same pressure. From this it is clear that as steel descends in the water it is compressed half as much again as the water at the same depth, so that at no point would the density of the water be as great as that of the steel; therefore there is no point where steel would be suspended above the bottom, even if the steel were dropped into a pit in the ocean reaching to the center of the earth.

It is believed that no modern vessel has compartments containing air which are sufficiently rigid to withstand the pressure of the water a hundred feet or more below the surface, so that the buoyant effect of these need not be considered.

In considering this question notice must be taken of the fact that the pressure of the water is exerted in all directions. That is, a body immersed in water sustains a pressure tending to draw it downward with a force practically equal to that tending to prevent its further sinking, just as in the air, bodies sustain the same pressure on all sides. From all these facts we may safely conclude that any object that sinks at the surface of the water will sink clear to the bottom of the ocean.



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